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FOUR YEARS

OF

IRISH HISTORY.

1845—1849.

A Sequel to "Young Ireland."

BY

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K.C.M.G.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE given a separate title to the Second Part of "Young Ireland," chiefly because of the unusual period which has elapsed since the publication of the first volume. The main cause of delay was the quantity of new materials placed at my disposal during last year. Describing transactions in which, for the most part, I had personally shared, I might perhaps have dispensed with aid; but contemporary correspondence and diaries are like living witnesses, who come to correct or confirm a writer's individual impressions, and I gladly accepted, and have used largely throughout the narrative, the valuable materials in question. I felt the more bound to do so that one aim of this book is to negative long-received opinions, and disturb rooted prepossessions, and this is a task which is attempted in vain unless a writer rests his deductions on solid evidence.

It will be more convenient to acknowledge these documents wherever they are used than to enumerate them here.

Of one series of facts I could have no personal knowledge. During the abortive rising in Tipperary in 1848, and the corresponding movements in Limerick, Wexford, and the borders of Meath, I was a close prisoner in Newgate. But of these events the information furnished to me is singularly full and exact. McManus gave me a narrative of the transactions in Tipperary before he left Ireland as a State Prisoner, Meagher wrote another in Tasmania, John Kavanagh sent me a third

narrative from New York, and I conversed on the subject with Smith O'Brien in prison, John Dillon at Havre, Stevens and O'Mahoney in Paris, and with nearly every person else whose name is associated with that era. Concerning the subsidiary movements, I received information of the same character —mostly in answer to a request published in the *Nation* in 1853 for documents with a view to a volume like the present,—but also to some extent during the last year. Before the State Prisoners left Ireland they directed that the Minute Book and correspondence of the Irish Confederation should be committed to my care by the persons with whom they had been secreted during the Insurrection. Six years later, when I sailed for Australia, I transferred them to Dr. Cane of Kilkenny, and after his death his family, at my instance, entrusted them to John Dillon. On Dillon's death they were restored to me; and I lodged them in the Royal Irish Academy as historical documents.

The private correspondence of O'Brien, Meagher, and Dillon, for which I had so much reason to be thankful in "Young Ireland," has proved still more valuable in this volume.

There is one contribution which I desire to specially acknowledge, because it did not come like the others from a political friend. Dr. Maunsell was a Conservative, probably an Orangeman, and a constant writer in the *Dublin Evening Mail*, the organ of the landed gentry; but he was an Irishman who sympathised profoundly with his country, in spite of party prepossessions, and a man of honour who may be heard with advantage on questions of conduct or principle. I have fortunately been enabled to have recourse to his Private Diary during the troubled period of the Secession and the State Trials, and to learn not alone what he, but what the Government, and the Party of Order (as the Unionists named themselves) thought and believed at that era.

This book is not a panegyric on the Young Irelanders, but

a narrative of transactions in which they were chiefly concerned. I have described with complete unreserve the faults by which they failed and fell. To do so seemed to me the plainest duty. A nation rarely changes its character, and in Ireland hitherto history has repeated itself with the fidelity of a stock piece at the theatre, where nothing is changed from generation to generation but the actors. The same mistakes in policy and conduct are committed over and over again; and a faithful narrative of one eventful era is like a mirror in which the Irish people may see many things reflected which it greatly behoves them to understand. The critics, whether native or foreign, who are most perplexed by the events of to-day in Ireland, are precisely those who have not taken the trouble to make themselves acquainted with the events of yesterday.

As the strange story of O'Connell's sudden fall from a nearly unexampled authority is written here for the first time, it was necessary to write it in unusual detail. The occult causes could be made clear and certain on no other condition. Napoleon sacrificing a world to the edacity of greedy kinsmen and kinswomen, scarcely less than to his own diabolic ambition, was a drama played on a more conspicuous stage, but not one conveying a more significant moral, or one applicable to so wide a range of human affairs.

Writing for the most part of the dead, I desired to be fair and generous; but I have never for this or any other purpose, sacrificed the substantial truth of history. This book does not contain one sentence of unfriendly criticism on any human being that was not indispensably necessary to explain the transactions of the time, and to point the lesson which they teach to another generation, or one statement of fact that is not the rigid truth as I understand and believe it.

The task I undertook—to make known the men of a past era, as they thought and acted, to the men of the present time—is now finished, to the best of my powers. To secure leisure to

accomplish it, I relinquished a career which habit had made pleasant; and to keep it free from the passions and prejudices of the hour, I declined to re-enter political life in Ireland. I am repaid by the hope that it will perhaps render the Irish question less of a mystery and puzzle to statesmen and thinkers, and that in the future, when my dust mingles with that of my comrades, it may still inspire young Irishmen to love and serve their country.

VILLA AIMÉE, NICE,
December, 1882.

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ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE

FOUR YEARS OF IRISH HISTORY.

Book I.

CHAPTER I.

THE RALLY OF YOUNG IRELAND—UNDER FIRE.

THERE are transactions in history so falsified and misunderstood, that the chief difficulty in dealing with them springs from the rooted prepossessions of the reader. Whenever important interests have been in conflict and one has succumbed, the facts are certain to be misjudged by the next generation, who commonly hear only the story of the successful competitor. The student of history who studies such annals is in the position of a man who looks through a stereoscope for the first time; he sees only confused blotches without colour or outline, and can scarcely be persuaded there is anything else to see; till suddenly he finds the focus, and the chaos becomes a picture. Of the period which I am now about to describe a fixed idea has got possession of the public mind—that certain immature politicians, of whom it is not clear, to critical persons, whether they were generous enthusiasts or only rash and contumacious youngsters, broke away from the veteran leader of the Irish people,

set up a theory of physical force in opposition to his constitutional doctrines, and having unfortunately got the lead, led the country to disgrace and disaster. There are many purely accidental events which seem to lend this theory a decisive sanction; the external circumstances at first view appear to harmonise completely with it. And yet in all history there is no theory more fatally contradicted by the facts of the case, when the facts come to be known.

I have revived in my memory the circumstances of that era with acute pain. It is for the most part a story of hopes disappointed, of sacrifices made in vain, of great power fatally squandered, of horrible calamity and suffering. But there is no part of our annals more essential to be studied, if the main object with which history is read be to gather examples and warnings for the future. There were no mistakes committed in that day which are not liable to occur again and again, because they are mistakes to which the Celtic race is prone; and to exhibit them is like setting up a storm-bell on a rock where shipwrecks have been common.

If the reader be one of those who think that the story of a people, and the biography of a great man, ought to be constructed like a stage-play, in which events are omitted, or transposed, to correspond with a pre-determined plot, in which unpleasant incidents are coloured or hidden away, he will find what he wants in more than one accessible book; but my design is to write the rigid truth, as it was known at the time to adequately informed men, and as it will, I believe, be

recognised universally in the end, in order that it may be a light and guidance to other generations.

The winter of 1845 marked the opening of an era, for ever memorable in Ireland; an era more calamitous and destructive than any in her sanguinary annals.

I have described in a former work the paralysis which fell on the national movement when O'Connell left Richmond Bridewell in broken health and spirits, and the incidents and calamities which scattered the Young Irelanders after the death of Thomas Davis.* Dillon was a wanderer in search of health, MacNevin was gradually sinking under a fatal disease, some needed to pursue their professional studies at a distance, others were disgusted and disheartened by the manifest design to transform the Repeal Association from a national into a sectarian body. Smith O'Brien, who still held aloof from identification with Young Ireland, might be counted on to resist any specific abandonment of the fundamental pact which held the national party together, but he was constantly absent and had apparently relinquished to Mr. John O'Connell the initiative and the control which he had been accustomed to exercise. The decline of enthusiasm was followed, as it always is in popular movements, by jealousies and dissensions. The people, having no longer a sure confidence or a clear purpose, fell into cabals. The Association found itself called upon to compose local quarrels between large sections of Repealers in Sligo, Waterford, Limerick, and Kilkenny, and did not always succeed in composing

* "Young Ireland," p. 759.

them. Agrarian crimes began to be frequently heard of; for when the peasant despairs of agitation he flies to the Ribbon Lodge. The Repeal Rent necessarily submitted to the same influence; it scarcely reached a tenth part of the amount received twelve months before. O'Connell was enjoying a holiday at Darrynane, but the journal supposed to possess his special confidence * applied itself steadily to the task of disparaging the remnant of the Young Ireland party; and in revolutionary eras denunciation is the preliminary stage of speedy trial and sentence. The opening of the new year, it seemed certain, would determine the fate of the marvellous organisation which had risen to so splendid an apogee, and now seemed tottering so perilously towards an ignominious disappearance.

I have hitherto refrained, whenever it was possible, from speaking of my own acts or opinions except as one of a party. In the stage of the narrative we have now reached this reticence will no longer be possible, for the death of Davis threw upon me the task of reconstructing and directing the party he had created. I was about to encounter the painful experience which always awaits the student, who after speculating and projecting in the free atmosphere of fancy, comes down to hustle against the obstacles with which the actual world is thronged. I had the aid, in that trying time, and in every serious emergency which followed, of thoughtful counsellors, who loved the Irish cause better than they loved ease or ambition, and of whom the people knew little. There

* The *Pilot*, edited by Mr. Richard Barrett.

are intellects like fecund trees which put forth gay blossoms and juicy fruit, and are the delight of the peoples' eyes; there are others like plants which grow their tubers under the soil, where careless feet tread without noting their existence, and this latter is a class which finds a natural habitat in the secret counsels of political parties, and was not wanting in this party. But a man must walk by the light of his own conscience and judgment in the last resort. Through the succession of troubled times which now began, the policy of the journal which I directed was, as we shall see, a constant and often a decisive factor in public affairs, and for that policy I accept the whole responsibility, and submit it cheerfully to the judgment of my country and posterity.

It seemed to me at that time, and experience and reflection have deepened the conviction, that it depended mainly on the *Nation* whether the Irish cause would not again disappear from view, as in 1835, and the people who had felt the divine inspiration which enabled Belgians and Greeks, Hungarians and Italians, to hope and strive for a national existence till it was attained, should not fall back in despair, or harness themselves once more like cattle to the triumphant car of an English party. I resolved that one post at least should not be yielded to the enemy, and much depended on that decision.

The few Young Irelanders who remained at home had frequent consultations. Our first duty was to perform an operation equivalent to the military tactique

of calling out the reserves. We had many friends and allies scattered through the island: the time was come to prove what they would do for the cause. The *Nation* must not lose a jot of the authority it had won by ability and courage, else the "permanent monster meeting," as some one named the array of readers on whom it could count for sympathy and co-operation, would be disbanded; for they had no common camp or flag except the journal. But it was not enough to call out the reserves; it was equally necessary, in the military slang prevalent in the journalism of that time, to withdraw all furloughs. The Young Irelanders had disappeared from Conciliation Hall since it had become, in the language of one of them—covering an equivoke which will be imperfectly understood out of Ireland—"such a *holy* show;" but if they were silent in Conciliation Hall, it might be feared that the slanders on their good name whispered in the country would soon be heard on the platform. And, moreover, it was from Conciliation Hall the cause was directed and controlled; if they were silent there, it might be effectually ruined, whatever they accomplished elsewhere.

It was admirable to note the zeal with which the remnant of the young men took up their task anew. McCarthy, Barry, and Mangan redoubled their exertions for the *Nation*. Hitherto they had only written verses; now they contributed critical papers of great interest. Even poor MacNevin, maimed and distracted by the pangs of a cruel disease, insisted on bearing his part in the experiment. And O'Gorman, Doheny, and Barry

promised at the beginning of the new year—then at hand—to resume their place in Conciliation Hall. But the greatest surprise to our watchful censors was the sudden irruption into national politics, and national journalism, of new men—men of whom, in some cases, they had never heard so much as the names. Thomas Francis Meagher, John Mitchel, Thomas Darcy McGee, and Thomas Devin Reilly for the first time began to take an open part in public affairs in Ireland; and Thomas Wallis and John Fisher Murray a silent but stringent interest. The reader will desire to know something of these recruits, and of their opportune appearance in the front rank of the national party. As they were men of marked characteristics, it will not be difficult to make him see them as they then appeared.

Thomas Francis Meagher was the son of a retired merchant in Waterford, who became in succession mayor and member for the city—a silent, steadfast man, held in general respect. On the occasion of Davis's death, young Meagher wrote to me expressing profound sympathy, and asking to be permitted to co-operate in raising a monument to his memory. He was at that time a youth of two-and-twenty,* who had scarcely heard his own voice except in a college debating society, and had not written a line for the public beyond one feeble copy of verses in the *Nation*. But there was a mesmerism in his language which touched me. I speedily made his personal acquaintance, and soon had the happiness of counting him among my friends. His education

* He was born at Waterford, on the 23rd of August, 1823.

had commenced at Clongowes Wood, the Jesuit College in Kildare, and had been completed at Stonyhurst, the Jesuit College in Lancashire, where Sheil, O'Loghlen, Wyse, More O'Farrell, and other notable Catholics of a previous generation had been trained. He won, more than once, the prize for English composition in Stonyhurst, and took a remarkable place in an Academic Debating Society, which the students of the Higher School in Clongowes Wood were allowed to establish; but he was somewhat negligent, in both colleges, of graver studies. He had not had the advantage of university training; his father shared with many Catholic fathers a profound distrust of the only university in Ireland — an institution which tempted Catholic students to apostacy by reserving its prizes for apostates; but he graduated in the greater university of the world by making a Continental tour before he came of age, during which he was keenly impressed, as he was fond of telling, by the condition of Belgium a dozen years after its escape from the domination of Holland. Meagher was middle-sized, and well made. The lines of his face were so round as to give it the character of languor and indolence, till it was lighted up with enthusiasm, when it became impassioned and impressive. His voice was not rich or flexible, but the genuine feeling with which he was moved rendered it an instrument fit to express a wide range of emotion and passion with astonishing power. In the counsels of the party he did not prove of much value; nor even when he attained to the height of his reputation was he ever

a leader in its cabinet. But after a little he began to address the Association in language such as it had never heard—the language not only of conviction, which Davis and his associates had constantly spoken, but of passion, poetry, and imagination. His powers were intense but limited. He never wrestled with an adversary foot to foot in close debate, or struck him down with the massive force of reason as with a club. He stirred the emotions at will, he moved the generous passions, but over the judgment he exercised less control. His speeches were as carefully prepared as Vergniaud's, and will bear comparison with the finest efforts of the great Girondist. In the style one may trace the inspiration of Grattan and Davis, and in later times a *soupçon* of Lamartine. There was no deliberate imitation, but he had been fed on Grattan and the *Nation*, and the time was at hand when the "History of the Girondists" was to intoxicate the young men of all civilised countries, and he did not escape the spell. Like Curran and Shiel, he had to struggle with natural impediments, which the impulse of the orator never entirely overcame. It was like listening to the mystical, sonorous music of the "Revolt of Islam," recited in Shelley's shrill treble, to hear Meagher pour out passion and pathos and humour in tones which possessed no note in perfection but intensity. In private he was a fast friend and a man of steady honour; but though he had a buoyant and enjoying disposition, he was not eminent for social any more than for colloquial endowments. "Flaunting and fashionable as I sometimes

was," he afterwards wrote to me, "I thoroughly hated Dublin society for its pretentious aping of English taste, ideas, and fashions, for its utter want of all true nobility, all sound love of country, and all generous or elevated sentiment." His rare and splendid gifts were seen only in the tribune. To the common eye, indeed, the new recruit was a dandified youngster, with a languid air and mincing accent obviously derived from an English education; but this was a vulgar error. Nature had made him a great orator, and training had made him an accomplished gentleman.

* The Meagher family came to be prosperous in a way which illustrates how much Ireland lost by losing the privileges of a nation. His grandfather, a Tipperary farmer, emigrated to Newfoundland towards the end of the last century. Newfoundland is the only British colony where the Irish constituted a majority of the population, and there the Tipperary farmer met such a welcome as in that day an Irish Catholic would scarcely have found elsewhere under the British flag. He became in turn a trader, a merchant, and a shipowner, and carried on a prosperous commerce between St. John's and Waterford city, where he finally placed his eldest son to represent his interest. This son married a daughter of one of the partners in a firm which derived its name from the father of Sir Thomas Wyse (Wyse, Cushin, and Quan), and this lady became the mother of Thomas Francis Meagher. The English reader should be told that this name is pronounced Mäher, or colloquially Ma'r. In the days when it was much in the newspapers it was a constant perplexity to Englishmen. In 1846, while the House of Commons still met in the temporary building used after the burning of St. Stephen's Chapel, I went with him to hear a debate. The accommodation for strangers was very limited, and it was necessary to provide for admittance beforehand, but our names had been duly entered by a friendly member, and we presented ourselves accordingly. The official janitor scrutinised his list carefully, and intimated that one of us was presenting himself without due warrant, as there was no such name on it as Meagher. We flew to our Irish member, Dan Callaghan of Cork, who panted up the long narrow staircase with much puffing and pain to vindicate himself, and pointed triumphantly to the veritable name in the official list. "That, sir!" cried the amazed door-keeper; "why, that's Meagre!" Mr. P. J. Smyth, M.P., who was Meagher's schoolfellow at Clongowes Wood, tells a curious story of that period. His first months in Stonyhurst were devoted to the production of a history of the Clongowes Debating Society. This work having been presented to Mr. O'Connell, upon the occasion of one of his frequent visits to Clongowes, he made the memorable remark—"The genius that could produce such a work is not destined to remain long in obscurity."

Mitchel's "Aodh O'Neill," just published at this time, had made a favourable impression on the country; I recognised in him the possibility of great success as a journalist; and I made him a proposal which induced him to give up his professional business in Banbridge, in order to reside in Dublin and become a regular contributor to the *Nation*. He was then thirty years of age and one year my senior. I have described his personal appearance.* In faculties and endowments he was a man who expanded and grew in many directions. In the beginning he wrote clumsily and even feebly; and it seemed as if the experiment of becoming a journalist would not prove successful, but in the end he came to write with admirable vigour and skill. His *début* as a speaker was a more complete failure than Sheridan's or Disraeli's. At a meeting of the '82 club, shortly after his removal to Dublin, with such a familiar theme as the memory of Thomas Davis; he sat down without being able to remember the speech he had prepared. Later he became singularly ready and self-possessed; his language grew clear and incisive; and he attained to that complete mastery of his faculties before a public assembly, which enables a debater to use them with an ease and power resembling the trenchant sweep and stroke of his weapon in the hands of a skilful swordsman.† He wrote slowly and with much deliberation, but his MS. shows few erasures and was generally

* "Young Ireland," p. 731.

† In recent American estimates of Mitchel he is sometimes described as an effective writer but a feeble speaker. In Ireland, in the era of revolution, he spoke better than he wrote.

as legible as a printed page. His style, till late in his career, was very variable, and the trace of a favourite author might generally be detected in it—at first Carlyle, and afterwards Lockhart and Cobbett—but in its maturity it was easy, flexible, and effective. He wrote greatly better in his own journal, when he came to have one, than he ever did in the *Nation*; but whoever has watched the development of character cannot have failed to note that individual responsibility alone brings out all a man's powers. One faculty he wanted at that time, and during all his career, a faculty without which great results are rarely accomplished, the gift ordinarily called judgment—a capacity of estimating justly the relative momentum of forces, and of discerning the fit occasion, which counts for so much in the conduct of affairs. He was the son of a Unitarian minister, who had been a United Irishman, and his career furnishes another example of a principle often illustrated in Irish history, that the seed of liberty is indestructible and buds anew after long hibernation.

Thomas Wallis was a man for whom Davis had a great, and perhaps an inordinate, admiration; that exaggerated estimate which a generous nature is apt to form of him who gave it the first impulse in a noble direction. He had been a tutor in Trinity College, and was reputed to be one of the fathers of the national movement which began there in 1840. He had been for a time editor of the *Citizen*, but had never hitherto written for the *Nation*. He lived, indeed, as secluded and unwholesome a life as Mangan, and to the majority

of Davis's friends was a sort of Veiled Prophet; but he came in at this era through the interposition of John Pigot, not indisposed, as it seemed, and not unfit as he conceived, to fill the great void which death had left in our ranks. Though Davis estimated Wallis's ability and his principles highly, he did not deceive himself as to his disposition. In a letter to Maddyn, written when he was most under Wallis's influence, a few months before the *Nation* appeared, he judged him strictly but justly.

"I do not regard myself as an active politician, quite the reverse; I take merely such part as informs me of the men and things about me, and gives me political connections. I am a student and not near the first form. Wallis is the greatest objector as to words and thoughts, and the most dogmatic man without exception that I ever met. He has a fine taste, an impassioned fancy, but his judgments are different from day to day, always extreme, often inconsistent, and then he loves singularity to a most mischievous extent. If he worked hard at writing or action he would soon get rid of his defects. [Torrens] McCullagh does more in a month than Wallis in a year." *

Wallis was a small, dark man, with lively eyes and a smile of conscious power. He was vain, but his vanity was not at all of the obtrusive character in which that weakness commonly presents itself; but calm and imperial like the sentiment of a dethroned prince, kept out of his undoubted rights for a time by ungrateful subjects. In naked intellectual force he might perhaps have matched Davis; but the moral qualities which were Davis's masterspells—complete unselfishness, sympathy

* Davis to Maddyn—"Maddyn Papers."

with other men's work, and an ever-present purpose for which he was ready to "spend and be spent"—were wanting. Davis never thought of himself, and he worked miracles; Wallis was not vulgarly selfish, but he could not ignore, for an instant, his own claims and pretentions, and he accomplished next to nothing. Whatever he knew was readily producible in conversation; it was as a talker he was most effective and persuasive, while of Davis it was said with great truth that he was like an iceberg, of which two-thirds were under water, only one-third visible.

John Fisher Murray was essentially a man of letters. He had been educated as a doctor, and afterwards became a barrister, but his devotion was reserved for the less profitable service of the muses. He was tall, dark, and ungainly, a man of vigorous physique and vigorous ability akin to Swift's, and with habits almost as eccentric. His handwriting, like his style, resembled the Dean's, and was as legible as print. His contributions went mainly to Conservative periodicals, but on all questions touching the rights and interests of Ireland he was a passionate nationalist. Murray was a Belfast man, the eldest son of Sir James Murray, a physician knighted by Lord Anglesea, and one of a generation which produced a remarkable group of eminent men; * but he detested the narrowness and bigotry which had

* Lord Cairns, Lord O'Hagan, Sir Emerson Tennent, Sir Samuel Ferguson, Sir Joseph Napier, Sir Alexander MacDonnell, and a man whom his intimates regarded as the equal of any of them, Robert James Tennent. This latter is the Tennent of whom Carlyle speaks so favourably in his recently published "Reminiscences."

replaced the old historic spirit in the cradle of the Volunteers and the United Irishmen. While I was editing a nationalist journal in that town he broke in on me with a letter of encouragement and congratulation. "If you make an impression on the North, and I do not see why you should not, Ireland is free." To aid the experiment he wrote repeatedly in the *Belfast Vindicator*, and afterwards sometimes in the *Nation*. I induced him at this time to become a regular contributor, and his racy and original articles constituted a new feature in Irish journalism. But he resided in London, and had no share in the counsels of the party, to the majority of whom he was personally unknown.*

Thomas Reilly was the son of a country attorney, created a taxing-master for political services to the Whigs. We were born in the same town, and had been educated in the same school; but he was more than seven years my junior, and came in after I had left. He completed his education at Trinity College, and in country or city I knew him constantly from his youth upwards. During the Federalist controversy he wrote an anonymous letter to the *Freeman*, sustaining my views with notable power; and as he was among the reserve I knew I could count upon in any serious emergency, I now invited him to contribute occasionally to the *Nation*. Those who know, or can imagine, what a diploma of merit it was considered by a young Whig

* Murray published several books, the best known of which in that day were "The World of London" (reprinted from *Blackwood's Magazine*) and "The Viceroy," a trenchant satirical novel picturing the mimic court of the Lord-Lieutenant.

sixty years ago to be admitted a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, or by a young Tory to be enrolled in the corps of the *Quarterly* or *Blackwood*, will understand how greatly a student, barely arrived at manhood, and longing for intellectual companionship and sympathy, estimated this opportunity. Reilly was a constant sufferer from nervous headache, which he attributed to excessive study for his degree, and this malady disturbed his judgment, and even distorted his affections. He was still a boy in manners and habits at that time: exuberantly joyous when he was free from suffering, and outspoken to a charm, perhaps to a fault. He was middle sized, but strongly built, with a head that seemed unduly large even for his sturdy frame, a great crop of light hair, and large, full, protruding blue eyes. He was a big, clumsy, careless, explosive boy in appearance, but he possessed a range of ideas and a vigour of expression which made him a companion for men.

Richard O'Gorman was tall, well made, and handsome, with dark hair and eyes, and a carriage which was easy and graceful. A young dandy, you would have said at the first glance; but his eye had a purpose in it, which was serious, and plainly far away from self-display; and his playful smile spoke of the contentment of a man who had found his task in life, rather than the self-complacency of a beau. He could not, perhaps, match the foremost of his associates in knowledge or natural gifts, but he had talents and information far beyond the range of young men of his class—the sons of commercial or professional notabilities—and he doubled

their force by applying them to a noble purpose. His family, who took a leading part in the movement for emancipation, had broken away from O'Connell on some question affecting their personal independence; but no trace of the family feud was discernible in the frank and generous demeanour of O'Gorman.

All these young men had been reared in prosperous homes, and trained in public schools; but Thomas Darcy McGee, a recruit more gifted in some respects than any of them, had enjoyed neither of these advantages. At the period when the bases of character are laid, the early death of his mother, and his father's second marriage, sent him an emigrant to the United States, in pursuit not so much of fortune as of food and shelter. Education and discipline are the chief moulders of character, but the watchful guidance and wise counsel, which form part of the daily discipline of a happy home, were altogether unknown to him. In forming his opinions and principles he had literally no guide but books. While he ought still to have been at the feet of an Irish teacher in the border county where he was born, he was earning his daily bread in a newspaper office in New England. This is a slavery which might have cramped and distorted the nature of Davis. At an early age he undertook the care of his younger sisters, and bore the burthen cheerfully through long years; such a responsibility softens the heart, but to how many stratagems does it reconcile men that they may make ends meet? Poverty teaches self-reliance, but it does not always teach self-respect or steadfastness; and

whatever defects marked McGee's character in after-life we must refer in part to the painful struggles in which his youth was passed.

McGee was born in Carlingford, in the County Down, and got his prenomen of Darcy from one of the few families of Catholic gentry able to maintain themselves there. He was educated at Wexford, where the vagrant pursuit of his father, who was an exciseman, happened to call him. He came by his mother's side of what he was fond of calling "good rebel blood." Her people had been out in the rising of '98, and she fed the imagination of her boy with tragic and romantic stories of that era. When he landed in Boston, early in his eighteenth year, he had neither money nor money's worth, except a prize received at a school examination from the hands of Sir Thomas Wyse; and this diploma of early merit had to go to a book-stall, that he might sleep under a roof. They are but ungenerous critics to whom the picture of the solitary Irish lad, as poor and unknown as the world-famous printer's apprentice who once walked the same streets dining on a penny roll, will not explain, and in part excuse, errors of discipline, even when they become, as they have an inevitable tendency to become, errors of conduct. His first employment in America was as a clerk in the office of the *Boston Pilot*, an Irish journal then and still planted in the old Puritan capital; and he used his opportunity so effectually that he became a contributor, and in the end its editor. An article of singular sensibility and power on periodical famines in

Ireland attracted the notice of Wilson Gray, a man of keen insight and wide sympathies, and he offered the unknown writer an engagement at a liberal salary on the *Freeman's Journal*. McGee had a genuine affection for Wilson Gray, but he found himself, when he entered on his task, in imperfect sympathy with his other colleagues. *The Freeman* was the organ of the commercial class—a class who desire what is right and just as far as they understand it, but who are commonly deficient in imagination and political faith, and easily alarmed by novelty or enthusiasm. The young poet naturally gravitated towards men with gifts liker his own. He was sent as special correspondent to London during the session of Parliament, but his political letters were a little wild and speculative. A solid *purée* of fact, with a piquant seasoning of personality, is what the public expect in that sort of *plat*, and did not find in McGee's; and it was plain, from certain volunteer contributions which he sent to the *Nation*, that he had plunged into the British Museum, and was more absorbed in the achievements of Luke Wadding and Art Kavanagh than in those of Sir Robert Peel or Lord John Russell. He had a passionate enthusiasm for whatever was Irish, and his mind was stored with knowledge on national subjects, collected under great disadvantages, and hence inexact and ill-digested, but curious and abundant, and it was his highest enjoyment to increase and classify this store. Dr. Gray was clearly within his rights in objecting, as he did, to the dissipation of time for which his firm were paying liberally, and the engagement came to a

sudden end. When the fact was reported to me I considered myself bound to protect him from the consequences of rashness, originating in his sympathy with the Young Irelanders, and he became London correspondent, and in the end a political writer, for the *Nation*. In years he was still little more than a boy,* not yet having reached the statutory age of manhood; but, as he has himself somewhere written of another, "his mind was far older, for life does not count by years, but by events and experiences, and some have lived as much at thirty as others at three-score." I have described his appearance. His face was odd, and might even be considered ugly; but it had what is better than comeliness in the face of a man—plasticity and expression. The prevailing character was agreeable, with a tendency, perhaps, to be too deferential; but it changed suddenly to correspond with the sentiment he was about to utter, and, in addressing a public audience, helped wonderfully the purpose of his speech. An unaccountable Negro cast of features was a constant source of jesting allusions, and induced his enemies, of whom he came to have a plentiful supply, to distort his name from Darcy McGee into Darky McGee; but, if he was as uncomely as Curran, he was nearly as gifted.

Among these young men it will be noted that there was not one of those who founded, or made the early reputation of the journal. None of these indeed had fallen away; Dillon wrote from time to time letters of

* McGee was born on the 13th of April, 1825, and was the youngest of the party in 1845.

sympathy and counsel, and the two young barristers whom Mr. Brodie was training in the abstruse mysteries of the law which regulates lands, tenements, and hereditaments, made time once a week to send occasional contributions, and constant criticism and advice on whatever was being done in Irish affairs.

To recruit the rank and file of an army scattered by war is a less difficult operation than to replace it *etat-major* when it has been destroyed; and the equivalent action in civil affairs is still more desperate; but it might be hoped with some confidence that when the new year opened a Young Ireland party would be found in its place, not identical indeed with the one the country had known earlier, but manifestly the same party recruited and re-organised, and as ready for action as at any period of its existence. All the gaps in its ranks were filled, except the gap which no one could fill.

To keep so many new recruits in harmony, it was essential to determine beforehand our course in difficulties long foreseen, and sure to arise. The quarrel with Old Ireland, as the immediate adherents of O'Connell now delighted to call themselves, only smouldered. Since Davis's death O'Connell had been silent and serene, but open and subterranean attacks on the *Nation* never ceased; and we had learned from Æsop that when lackeys shower blows and bad language, it is not safe to trust to the smiles of their master. It was very probable we should soon have to fight for our opinions, perhaps for our existence as a party; and the

policy we adopted might evade the danger, or, if that proved impossible, determine the victory. The principles of the journal and the party were of course fixed, but the policy fit to be pursued under the circumstances of the hour can be determined only when the hour is about to dawn. Principles are like fixed stars, always in their unchangeable places; policy is the chart of the pilot who sails by their light. He shifts with the wind and tide; his craft may be driven out of her course by a tempest, she may lie like a log on the waters in a calm; he tacks to the right to avoid breakers on a dangerous coast, and to the left to give a wide berth to a sunken rock, but all the time he is pressing on with unsleeping watchfulness to his appointed port. The upshot of our consultations amounted to this: a quarrel with O'Connell would endanger, perhaps destroy, the public cause, and must be avoided by all honourable means. It was true that a great opportunity had been lost on the release of the State prisoners, but a national cause outlives reverses, and we were young and could wait. To complete the work of education and conciliation which Davis had begun, would occupy all our energies for many a day. Prejudices of sect, of race, of class, and of locality, which kept the people disunited, had to be sapped and mined. But if it were true, as men whispered on all sides, that the long retreat since Clontarf was to end in a new Whig alliance; if the leader was going to pull down the green flag once again, as in 1835, we must resist that manœuvre at all costs. We had prevented him retreating on Federalism; and though the public spirit

had been steadily declining ever since that attempt, it might be hoped it was strong enough to forbid a more shameful retreat upon Whiggery. At worst, if the cause must go down, better go down with it, and leave to another generation an honourable example and a sacred duty; for he was a true philosopher who declared that the last resource of oppressed nations are writers able to bequeath to posterity tasks which posterity will faithfully perform.

I expounded these opinions in the *Nation* plainly, but with a scrupulous avoidance of offence. Men who believed that God's justice controls the current of human affairs, and who, having read history, knew how the sternest resistance breaks like glass under the pressure of a great emergency, might, I urged, confidently await the future; for the future is the storehouse of opportunities. Sooner or later the hour would come when patience and courage would reap their reward. And meantime we must strive to carry with us all the elements of a nation, its gentry and merchants, as well as its artisans and peasantry. Ulster, jealous and froward as she was, influenced by bigots, led by a gentry who had a manifest interest in keeping her apart, might and must be won. It was Ulstermen who had planned the national movement of '82, the national movement of '98, and the first Protestant movement for Catholic Emancipation. The cause for which Porter and Orr died on the scaffold, the McKennas of the Monaghan Militia under a fusillade, and McCracken in the field, the cause of a United

Ireland, begotten in Belfast, nurtured in the glyns and hamlets of Antrim, and sealed with the testament of blood on the plains of Down, might still be made dear to men of the same race.* An easier task was to win the middle-class Protestants in Leinster and Munster, engaged in commerce and professions, for they had the clearest interest in the design to which the bulk of their countrymen were pledged. They were kept away only by the fear of Catholic ascendancy, and against this danger they were entitled to receive the most positive guarantees. The language of the northern patriot, Drennan, had, after half a century, lost none of its touching truth: "Blessed be the man who falls like Joseph on the neck of his brethren, however different in character or feelings, kisses them and weeps aloud, and says 'I am thy brother.'" † The agents to be relied upon

* That the hope of a national union for national ends was not ill-founded we now know. Before half a dozen years the most vigorous and enlightened of the Presbyterian clergy were united with the remnant of the Young Ireland party in a great public purpose, second only to national independence—the protection of Irish farmers from arbitrary eviction and unjust rents. Nationalists were perhaps in a minority in Ulster in 1845, but we knew they were not in so hopeless a minority as Reformers had been in Scotland half an age earlier. If nationality made little visible progress in the North, it was at worst not so effectually repressed as sympathy with Parliamentary Reform had been repressed in the whole island of Britain under Pitt, Addington, and Percival.

† Though this hope was baffled and impeded by the sectarian tone adopted in Conciliation Hall, it is instructive to note that it was well founded. Before three years had elapsed there was a Protestant Repeal Association in Dublin, consisting exclusively of recruits of that religion; and notwithstanding the humiliating reverse to which the national cause was subjected before twenty years a section of the clergy of the Established Church and of the landed gentry, led by professors of the Protestant University, declared for the government of Ireland by Irishmen in their own parliament. Even in 1845 the most authentic organ of the Protestant interest and propertied class, foreshadowed a national confederacy which would be crowned with immediate success. "However improbable, it is not impossible that better terms might be made with the Repealers than the government seem disposed to give. A hundred thou-

were education and conciliation, the one to strengthen and discipline, the other to unite the whole nation. And of all revolutionary forces education was the greatest. Ignorance cowers, whines, and despairs; trained men are patient and hopeful. Such men founded Holland on a swamp, and held it against the master of Europe; such men preserved the tap-root of nationality in Belgium when the soil was desolated by constant war, and trodden by a succession of foreign invaders. It was the schoolmaster who liberated America, and who was preparing the inevitable liberation of Germany and Italy. The deliverance of the Irish people might be distant, but it was sure, on the sole condition that they were true to themselves.

This was the policy adopted by the Young Ireland party at that time—Conciliation and Education, not Conspiracy and Arms; and there will not, I think, be found a syllable spoken or written by any of them which runs counter to it. It is important to note this fact in its relation to transactions which were soon to occur. They had not ceased to believe that Ireland had a *casus belli;* but the opportunity which justifies the last resource of the wronged had been permitted to disappear for the present, and it would have been mis-

sand Orangemen, with their colours flying, might yet meet a hundred thousand Repealers on the banks of the Boyne; and on a field presenting so many solemn reminiscences to all, sign the Magna Charta of Ireland's independence. The Repeal banner might then be orange and green, flying from the Giant's Causeway to the Cove of Cork, and proudly look down from the walls of Derry upon a new-born nation."—*Dublin Evening Mail,* cited in the *Nation,* Aug. 2, 1845.

leading the people not to recognise the fact and teach them to accommodate themselves to it.

It must not be supposed that our adversaries knew so little of the arts of party warfare as to allow us to rally and reform our ranks in peace. We were kept under fire during the entire operation by the sharp-shooters of Mr. John O'Connell. It sounds like a paradox that a person whom I have described as feeble and trivial should be so considerable a motive-power in these affairs, but nothing is easier to comprehend. He was able to sway a powerful lever—the leader of the people; and the leader of the people could move the bulk of the nation, and in an especial manner the Catholic clergy, whose confidence he had won by signal services.

If O'Connell or his son believed the Young Irelanders to be dangerous he had doubtless a perfect right to thwart and resist them, but in no case by the methods which were employed. Personal slander became a constant weapon against men who slandered or assailed no one. Nothing could be said against their lives, but it was easy to tell a pious people that they were the enemies of religion, and this device was in constant use. Our first unmasked assailant was a clergyman named Power.* He wrote an indignant letter to the *Tablet*, complaining that Mr. Lucas was disparaging Mr. Barrett, a faithful follower of the Liberator, for offences

* This was the clergyman whose letter on the "Duty of a Soldier" constituted an overt act in the indictment against the State prisoners.—"Young Ireland," p. 396.

which were after all so trivial as his sins against the Primate and the *Nation*.

"It is to me," he said, "perfectly inexplicable that one of your well-known sagacity does not at once perceive that the imputations of the godless *Nation* and the censures of Dr. Crolly are the best evidence that could be produced that the man whom they assail is the unpurchasable, steadfast, faithful advocate of the liberties of his country and the religion of the people."

"The godless *Nation!*" I joined issue on the moment, in a letter which I addressed to the *Tablet*, that the antidote might follow the bane. I had long desired, I said, to find anyone with a name and character to make the charge implied in this epithet in terms that could be grappled with, that I might put the slander to shame. But such an opponent must come into the court of inquiry with clean hands. If Mr. Power were an opponent answering to this description, I desired no other. But it was proper to state that the staff of the *Pilot* had reported throughout Dublin that it was he who instigated them to publish the shameful falsehood that the Primate was insane. If he could deny this charge, I would invite him to debate the other question; if he could not deny it, he was entitled to no answer—he was beneath controversy. Mr. Power wrote a reply contending that such a report actually existed; he had himself heard it with details more humiliating than any given in the *Pilot*, and to communicate a current report to the press was not a falsehood. As for the *Nation*, he called it "godless" because it advocated the godless system of education established in the Provincial Colleges; and

the *Tablet*, he insisted, must be of the same opinion. I considered a polemist like this worthy of no further notice, but Mr. Lucas held him in an iron grasp. He admonished him that by admitting the authorship of the slander on Dr. Crolly he assumed a very serious responsibility. As to Mr. Barrett, the charges against him were that he had forged a letter designed as the basis of a slander, and that he had left the falsehood against the Primate without contradiction long after he knew it to be unfounded—charges to which the friendship of the Liberator could hardly be pleaded as an adequate answer. Nothing that had ever been written in the *Tablet* justified Mr. Power in applying the epithet "godless" to the *Nation*, for the *Tablet* always admitted the honourable intentions and personal integrity of Mr. Duffy and his friends, and, in the opinions they held, had unfortunately the support of many of the Irish clergy, whom Mr. Power would scarcely denounce as "godless." As for Mr. Barrett, it was a disgrace to the Catholic cause in Ireland to be identified with forgery, and Mr. Lucas heartily prayed that so good a cause might be speedily purged of so shameful an ally. This answer was overwhelming, but the dogged dullness which confounds a charge with positive proof, and the factious malignity which is indifferent to evidence, were content with Mr. Power's vindication, and the "godless *Nation*" became a favourite epithet with Mr. John O'Connell's partisans. The lie, indeed, played an important part in Irish affairs for more than a generation.

I can still recall the wrath and scorn which this base

employment of religion as a mask for party passions excited in honourable minds—a wrath and scorn the more intense in proportion to the seriousness of their convictions. One ecclesiastic in an eminent position, a professor of theology in the National College—the same, indeed, who had attacked the *Nation* for careless writing on dogmatic questions a year before—poured out this feeling in spontaneous eloquence, of which he was a master. He was disgusted, he said, at the liberalism in doctrinal matters which would shade away and refine truth to the likeness of error :—

"But worse, baser, viler, and more loathsome is the other extreme, and infinitely more dangerous to faith in the end—the practice of making the spouse of Christ a political or personal stalking-horse, of trafficking in the strong faith, in the ardent devotion and religious delicacy of feeling of the people, for political ends or the gratification of vanity or spleen, or for any end; of representing religion as a masked assassin of character with her dagger and bowl—this is, practically at least, hypocrisy of the worst kind: it tends to destroy all confidence in the reality of whatever is generous and sincere in man: its goal is the utter extinction of all religion—atheism in practice."*

And the *Dublin Review*, the highest organ of the Catholic Church in the empire, took occasion to strike the same note. In reviewing the Ballad Poetry of Ireland, it recognised the beginning of a national literature, and approved heartily of the spirit in which it was undertaken. If the hopes of creating such a literature were disappointed from lukewarmness or indifference, "a deep responsibility and heavy shame," the writer

* Private letter *penes me.*

significantly declared, "would rest upon those whose influence was withheld from the task of realising them." This atonement for bigoted censure was the more welcome that the writer was also a professor in the National College—a man "of whom scholarship and sanctity," as one of the most distinguished of his contemporaries has declared, "were special characteristics,"* the eminent ecclesiastic, who afterwards for nearly a generation conducted its affairs as President. Among the men who tendered me personal sympathy and good wishes at that time was a young priest, then professor, afterwards president, in the Missionary College of All Hallows. I had never seen him before, but I was much struck by his simplicity, suavity, and good sense; scarcely foreseeing, however, that he was destined to become one of the most remarkable bishops of his day; a man who took a fearless part with the national party when he sympathised with them, and a fierce and fearless part against them when he—or they, as he believed—had changed opinions.† There were not in the Irish Church at that time three men of rarer gifts or higher character than these three; and it is good that those who will read with pain and shame the proceedings of other ecclesiastics a little later should remember this fact.

O'Connell still held occasional meetings and banquets in the country. His constant theme was the necessity of a parliamentary party; "with sixty-five

* Charles William Russell, D.D., an Essay by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

† Known to the present generation as Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry.

members he would carry Repeal and restore the parliament to College Green." When he abandoned the policy of the Mallow Defiance, the only alternative, if he continued a Repealer, was a parliamentary party. If he would not fight, then he must persuade or coerce the Legislature; there was literally no third method. He recognised this necessity so clearly, that after his Federal proposal had failed it was the topic to which he constantly applied himself. At local meetings and banquets he exhorted constituencies to insist upon their representatives supporting the national cause or to cashier them. In Sligo he promised that there should be seventy Repealers in the next parliament; the Clare election had carried Emancipation, and the election at which seventy Repealers were chosen would carry Repeal. In Galway he exhorted the people to elect members of the Repeal Association, two for the city and two for the county. In a public letter he bade the Whigs "not to lay the flattering unction to their soul that this rule would be relaxed in the slightest degree;"* and he warned the most gifted of them, Richard Sheil, in language which subsequent events rendered memorable, that even he must cease to sit for an Irish constituency unless he returned to his original faith as a Repealer. "Sheil is a brilliant orator (he said); I love, I regard, and I esteem him; but when I tell him from this spot that he shall not continue to represent Dungarvan if he does not become a member of this Association, I speak a truth most unpleasant to me, but

* Letter to the Repeal Association, dated August 14th, 1845.

one that assuredly will be worked out."* These were promises sufficiently specific, and the time was near at hand to give them effect.

In the Association, meantime, things went badly. Mr. John O'Connell proceeded day by day as if his aim were to undo all that had been done in 1843 and 1844. Protestants were alienated by harangues which were as much out of place in a Repeal Association as in a Chamber of Commerce, and the sympathy of foreign nations was wantonly rejected. When the State prisoners were in Richmond Bridewell, O'Connell predicted that the war policy of France would burst open the prison doors; but Mr. John O'Connell thought proper in the name of the people of Ireland to declare that the special representative of that policy, M. Thiers, the man whose designs more than any other force then in existence tended to bring about a renewal of the surrender of 1782, was "a characterless vagabond"—an estimate of the French statesman which corresponds imperfectly with the opinion of the rest of Europe. And this was not the worst; somewhat later an incident occurred which gave the Head Pacificator an opportunity of transcending the folly of his patron. In the American House of

* Repeal Association, reported in the *Nation*, Nov. 1st, 1845. In these country excursions O'Connell was frequently accompanied by Mr. Barrett, fresh from his slanders on the Primate, and Mr. Dillon Brown piebald with social sins. No one familiar with public affairs can ignore the necessity sometimes imposed upon a leader to protect the scabby sheep of his flock; but to select such men as his travelling companions, and to permit them to harangue audiences on the class of representatives whom they should select, and even on the interest of faith and morals, proved a disastrous mistake—a mistake which cannot be left out of view in a survey of O'Connell's career, for it was one of those for which he paid a terrible penalty in the end.

Representatives a member, of Irish lineage,* moved a series of resolutions affirming that it was the duty of the Republic to extend the blessings of its free institutions to every practicable quarter of the world, that the Irish people had long been ground down by British misgovernment, and that the House would give due consideration to any overture from that people to be incorporated with the Union. The most loyal gentleman in Ireland might see with satisfaction such a spur applied to the lagging spirit of English statesmen. To nationalists it was necessarily a God-send, for it was under the pressure of foreign troubles their desire would be most speedily accomplished. It might have been answered that the good wishes and sympathy of America were always welcome, though the Repeal Association was aiming not to break away from the empire, but to regain for Ireland her rightful position in it. But the Head Pacificator in the name and on the behalf of the Liberator, "who confided in his fidelity to the last extremity of human confidence," and of his noble spirited friend, John O'Connell (both being absent on the occasion), made this stupendous declaration :—

"Not only do I disdain the attainment of selfish Irish nationality at the sacrifice of abandoning, even for a moment, the sublime principle of universal liberty, religious and civil, to every created man; but I solemnly declare before High Heaven that rather than see Ireland independent and annexed to America, and polluted by sending representatives to sit in a Congress that sanctions Negro slavery, I would wish to see Ireland with every man, woman, and child on her soil, myself of course included,

* Hon. Phelix McConnell.

overwhelmed and submerged for ever by a swelling and upheaving of the wild Atlantic Ocean."

Only a vivid imagination can realise the wrath and horror of men whose dearest hope in life was to lift up their nation again, on reading this tirade, uttered without comment or contradiction, in the name of the Irish people, and from the platform of their national Association. It was slight consolation to remember that it was made by a crazy rhapsodist who was living on funds contributed by the people whose devotion to their mother-country he denounced as selfish, or that Ireland already sent representatives to a parliament which, up to a dozen years before, had sanctioned Negro slavery as complacently as the Congress of the United States, and some of whose members had bought, sold, reared, and kidnapped slaves; or, indeed, that more intolerable wrong was at that moment inflicted on tenants-at-will in Mayo or Kerry than on slaves in Alabama or South Carolina. For the sting was that our best allies, the American people, would feel outraged at being universally included in a reproach applicable only to a bare majority, and would hold the Irish people responsible for language uttered in their name without repudiation or dissent. At bottom it was impossible to doubt that this preposterous Pacificator did speak with authority, and that the transaction was as much the result of a man behind the screen as the street-drama of "Punch and Judy." It may seem strange that Mr. John O'Connell should desire to degrade a cause which he hoped some day to lead, and

to diminish a power of which he claimed the reversion. Men not disposed to judge him with inordinate severity —some, indeed, who were still his associates at this time—were of opinion in latter years that he was willing that it should dwindle into such a cause, and such an organisation, as would submit to his spur and rein. "A little donkey," says the Eastern proverb, "is easily mounted;" not so a stallion or an elephant, and the Young Liberator's powers of equitation were limited.

While the rally of the Young Ireland party was still in progress, before Davis was three months in his grave, the danger we foresaw in the distance arose suddenly. In December, 1845, the government of Sir Robert Peel resigned, during a parliamentary recess—

> "Like ships that have gone down at sea
> While heaven was all tranquillity."

The apprehension which began to exist of a famine in Ireland induced him to propose the repeal of the Corn Laws; but some of his colleagues refused to assent to this measure, and he delivered up the seals precipitately, and advised the Queen to send for Lord John Russell. The Whigs were, it appeared, on the threshold of power. That the Irish Whigs who were masquerading as Repealers would intrigue to sacrifice the national question in the interests of the new administration might be safely assumed, and that O'Connell would resist them was by no means certain. O'Brien and the Young Irelanders accustomed to speak at Conciliation Hall were in the country for the Christmas holidays;

I was precluded from speaking there by the new rules, and the decisive, and often irrevocable, first step might be made before any of us could so much as be heard. The next meeting of the Association was a cardinal one. As soon as the chair was taken a brief, significant note was read from O'Brien. If the Whigs came in he trusted they would not be permitted to effect by corruption what the Tories had failed to effect by coercion. If the people forgot their pledge, never to remit their claims to self-government, he would regret having avowed himself a Repealer. His motto was "Repeal and no Compromise." O'Connell moved the insertion of this letter on the minutes; but why, he asked, should they pause to insert it on the minutes, it would be engraved on the heart of every honest Irishman; his own motto also was "Repeal and no Compromise." The skilful tactician had not forgotten the device by which he circumvented John Keogh a generation earlier—wreathing him with compliments at the outset, and then gently leading the meeting to reverse the policy Keogh had recommended. In the course of a long speech, on a variety of topics, he proceeded to do the precise thing against which O'Brien had forewarned him—to offer the parliamentary support of the Irish members to the coming Government. "The new administration will be wanting us, and they will have us, if they do good work for the Irish people." The good work was specified: let them repeal the Corn Laws—which, as it happened to be the task they were called to office to accomplish, was not an embarrassing condition; and, as it was a task in which

an agricultural country like Ireland had no special interest, was an amazing one in the mouth of an Irish tribune—let them pass an Act to hold the Committees on Irish Railways in Dublin instead of London; let them advance money to construct railways on which the people would be employed, and an Act to improve the tenure of land; and, finally, let them restore the magistrates dismissed by Peel, or who had resigned in consequence of his arbitrary proceedings. If Lord John Russell did these things he would become a popular man, and O'Connell predicted that he would have "to transfer his green cap over to him." These were scarcely the achievements the green cap typified when it was presented to the popular leader in the presence of an organised nation on the Rath of Mullaghmest; the mystic head-dress was too plainly shrinking from a diadem to a night-cap. The hybrid harangue concluded with the ordinary formula—"At the same time, we proclaim that *we deeply regret to think* there is no chance of permanent and effectual redress till we have our own Parliament sitting again in College Green." These portentous declarations passed without immediate comment. Their reception by the Whig press of London enables us to measure their importance to that party. The *Sun* declared that Lord John had been awaiting this speech, and finding the Irish members would support him, he was prepared to form a government. The *Globe* undertook to predict that, after twelve months of a Whig Government, "Repeal would be a thing of history."

To me this compact seemed the fatalest stroke that fortune could strike against Ireland. The former connection between O'Connell and the Whigs had corrupted a mass of men to the core. High and low felt its influence, from the barrister who wanted to be a judge, and the baronet who wanted to be a peer, down to the peasant who wanted to be a policeman, and the town voter whose taxes were paid with money from the Castle, or who got the promise of a situation for his son or his brother. We had ejected this evil spirit with enormous pains; was it to come back stronger than before? Peel was helping the national party by breaking down the old barriers of Protestant ascendency; if he destroyed their monopoly in the Church and University, nothing would keep the educated Protestants from the national ranks. Peel drove them towards us; Russell would drive them from us. And as regards remedial measures and provisions against a famine, Peel was far abler to devise and to carry out such measures than his rival. The one thing the Whigs had to give was places, and places meant bribes for silence or apostacy.

In the next *Nation* I stated these objections without reserve. But this was not all; I insisted there was no chance of obtaining from Lord John Russell even the slender boons specified. If he made an administration drawn from a minority in both Houses, it would live on the sufferance of Peel, and could concede nothing which Peel was not equally willing to grant. Like the last Russell Government, it would probably be too weak to

rule and too mean to resign. If the Whigs wanted the aid of Ireland there was a method to obtain it: let them lean on the national party on the one hand as openly as they leaned on the Anti-Corn Law League on the other, make Repeal an open question, appoint an Irish nobleman Lord Lieutenant, who would be as free to countenance Repeal as Lord Anglesea had been to countenance Emancipation. If this were plainly impossible, then it was manifest that, in supporting them, Irish members would betray the cause to which they were pledged.

Lord John Russell did not prove equal to the task imposed upon him; Peel returned to office to abolish the Corn Laws, and the Association was reminded by its leader that he and they were for "Repeal and no Compromise." But the sentiment which his action excited at the moment among men who understood its import may be gauged by a letter, written to me, the day his Whig speech was reported in London, by one of the most moderate and self-controlled of the young men—one who was a constant monitor of forbearance and patience:—

"I saw O'Connell's speech in to-day's *Times*. What the infernal Devil does he mean? If he meditates betraying the cause, I would appeal to the country against him without a moment's hesitation. However, you on the spot know, of course, far better what is going on and how to act than I can here. But will you send me true accounts? I have just heard from a gentleman who mixes with Whig coteries that Lord John will take office now that Dan says the Irish members will come over, the doubt

of which was his difficulty before. What it is to be engaged in a holy cause with ———."*

The Tory press exulted in what they represented as a fulfilment of their early predictions. "Mark," they said; "he lifted the Repeal banner when the Whigs went out; whenever the Whigs come back he will pull it down again."

The danger was postponed, but the interval was like a truce between declared belligerents. The Young Irelanders had due warning of what was to be feared whenever the fall of Peel took place; and O'Connell was apprised that a new Whig compact, if he had such a measure in view, would be stubbornly resisted. What none of us in the least surmised was the vital fact that the strong man was labouring under a fatal disease, which paralysed his powerful will and rendered him an easy prey to sycophants and intriguers.†

* The blank is in the original letter.
† See "Young Ireland," p. 531.

CHAPTER II.

FAMINE AND COERCION.

A GREAT calamity, from which Ireland was only separated by a brief interval, already began to throw its shadows before. In the autumn of 1845 there were rumours that a blight had fallen on the potato in various districts; and before the close of the season there was scarcely a county in which the disease had not made some progress. No one indeed foresaw all the tragic events impending, but vague uneasiness and alarm began to prevail. A famine was an ordinary occurrence in Ireland, and familiarity had diminished its terrors; but a famine on the scale of the one at hand had never occurred even in Ireland, and was scarcely known in the annals of the human race. A benevolent country gentleman indicated at the beginning where the real peril lay, with a foresight that was remarkable; for in truth it was not the failure of the potato, but the failure of all-wise and adequate government that was to be feared. "I think," he said, "that we approach a time when peace will be worse than war, when the more quiet grows the country, and the stronger the government, the more easily will the landlords draw away their rents to live elsewhere."* The Conservative press

* Mr. Keane Mahony, Kerry.

made light of the popular fears; they were pronounced to be mere panic, where they were not false pretences to evade the payment of rent. The potato crop, the *Mail* asserted, was more than an average one, and a partial failure did not involve any serious danger. But the local reports belied this smooth *placebo;* Poor Law guardians and clergymen, including some of every denomination, affirmed that in many districts when winter arrived there would be no sound potatoes left. It soon became known that the calamity was not confined to Ireland; the blight fell at the same time on widely separated districts of the world; on Belgium and Canada, on Hungary and Holland, on Germany and the United States, and more or less on every district of the three kingdoms. But the danger was greatest in Ireland, because in Ireland alone the root which the blight had attacked was the sole food of the small farmers and agricultural labourers.* The cereal crop and the swine and cattle which they reared were barely sufficient to furnish the share of the produce claimed by the landlord. Potatoes at best are so perishable that they rarely lasted to the end of the year, and whenever they ran out there was partial famine. In several of the western counties a peasantry living on patches of barren soil, which did not produce enough of this simple food

* The potato had been cultivated for two centuries and a half since its introduction by Raleigh; but it had become the sole food of the people only in the Penal Times, when they were reduced to hopeless submission. In the present century the tuber had been growing worse and worse; for the dry sweet potato once used, a large humid root was substituted, more productive, but less nutritious. An acre of this inferior potato yielded more food, such as it was, than five acres of oats.

to maintain life, and working at wages which seldom exceeded 4d. a day, were accustomed to emigrate yearly to England, to earn a few pounds "to pay the master." A crowd of ill-fed, under-sized men, clad in patched and ragged clothes, sometimes fastened with withes or wisps of straw, made their way across the channel on the open deck of a small steamer, and during the merry harvest-time were the sport of English yokels, many of whom could form no other idea of an Irishman than these serfs of a Connaught squire. Between this population and death by hunger and cold there lay but a narrow interval.

An eminent physician,* in a timely pamphlet, warned the community that the danger began but did not end with the poor. After famine comes fever, from which no class can shelter themselves, and which is mortal to the prosperous. For a century and a half all the epidemic fevers with which Ireland had been visited had one origin. They had occurred under widely different circumstances; in the killing cold of December, in the stifling heat of the dog-days, in a season of rain, in a season of drought, but they were invariably preceded by a famine. To guard the outposts against this scourge, scarcely less dreadful than civil war, the poor must be fed.

A meeting was held in Dublin at the close of autumn in the neutral ground of the City Assembly House, to press on the Government immediate precautions. But what precautions was it fitting the Government should

* Dr., afterwards Sir Dominic, Corregan.

take? O'Connell urged that distillation and brewing should be stopped, the ports opened to the free importation of corn from all countries, and that the exportation of cereals from Ireland to foreign countries should be prohibited. "I do not mean," he added, "to suggest any prohibition to the exportation of food between England and Ireland; in fact it is possible we may get more from England than we shall send there."* He further proposed a loan of a million and a half to create stores of food, and an income-tax, at the rate of ten per cent. on resident proprietors and fifty per cent. on absentees, to pay it off. An adjourned meeting approved of these proposals, except the loan and the income tax, of which nothing further was said. Lord Cloncurry while he concurred in these measures, considered them inadequate. He was of opinion that the exportation of food to England ought to be entirely prohibited; and he professed his readiness to give his whole income during the emergency to save the people. Admiral Oliver, a bitter old Tory, who had spent his life in local brawls between Orange and Green, graciously suggested that the Repeal rent ought to be applied to this purpose; and Mr. John Reynolds, a demagogue of the other colour, had something to say in reply, but the meeting peremptorily refused to hear any more of this barbarous bye-battle. A deputation, which included the Duke of Leinster, Lord Cloncurry, the Lord Mayor,

* The facts did not bear out this amazing prediction. During the first year of the famine the cereals sent out of Ireland amounted to more than three times the quantity brought in. During eleven months we received 467,065 quarters of corn, and exported 1,777,694.

and O'Connell, carried the proposal to the Lord-Lieutenant. It was thought that their reception by Lord Heytesbury was somewhat ungracious. He promised nothing except to submit their scheme to the Government, who were already considering the subject. But in appealing to him they must have known that he was merely the figure-head of the ship of State, and guided its course no more than other figure-heads. And, indeed, if they were face to face with the actual motive-power in affairs, they might have been told that their proposals were ridiculous.

"Opening the ports" was a device suitable to England, for England had to draw upon foreign granaries for her ordinary supplies; but wholly unsuitable to Ireland, which grew more food than it consumed. The harvest of 1846 was pronounced to be the most abundant that had ever ripened on our soil; and it was not only abundant, but cheap: the price of wheat and corn was lower in Cork and Dublin than the price of foreign wheat and corn in London, before they paid the duty to which they were still subject by law. To open the ports in such a country let in nothing that was wanted. It was equivalent to a proposal to relieve Birmingham by encouraging the importation of Belgian hardware. Stopping distillation was quite beside the question. If the Irish people were to eat the food they grew, there was an ample supply without stopping distillation; if they were not to eat their own food, stopping distillation would only increase the quantity to be exported to England. At best it was a delusion, for one of the

principal distillers in Ireland* shortly afterwards declared that he did not consume a barrel of oats or barley which was not imported from abroad. The energetic resourceful tribune, while his faculties were unimpaired, would have had other counsel to tender his country in such an emergency. What was needed was not to open the ports to foreign grain, but to shut them fast on what was home grown. Hungary and Belgium, Switzerland and Wurtemburg, every country in Europe which the blight seriously menaced, prohibited the exportation of corn and established public granaries. In England, the Corn Laws shut her ports effectually, by making the home market the most profitable to the seller, who had no inducement to export. The Irish landlords, who knew where the remedy lay, and feared that the people might soon come to know it, were taking time by the forelock. There was a larger exportation of grain to London and Liverpool during the month of November than had ever before taken place in a similar period. Every Irish port was crowded with vessels carrying food out of a country threatened with famine. Habit, and the temptation of impunity, had long familiarised the Irish proprietor with exactions which were elsewhere unknown; but it must not be forgotten that he had sometimes little choice between becoming an oppressor or becoming a beggar. His estate was often loaded with settlements and mortgages, and tied up in leases to middlemen, who relieved him from the necessity of dealing with the poorer tenantry in return for the privilege of robbing them at

* George Roe.

discretion. That men in such a position would take the initiative in making sacrifices was not to be hoped. But had Ireland been able to protect herself, as self-governed countries protected themselves, a famine would have been impossible. Rents for a time would have been seriously diminished—in some cases, perhaps, they would have been extinguished—but the grants afterwards made for unproductive public works and demoralising food depôts would have compensated the landlords on a scale sufficiently liberal, in the case of a calamity primarily affecting their own estates. To close the ports was the remedy the *Nation* constantly recommended; to keep and eat our own food. I insisted, indeed, specifically, that if there was to be a famine it would be "a famine created not by the blight, but by the landlords;" for, though the potatoes were gone, the corn remained. One of the young men wrote in language which the calmest judgment may still confirm:—

"Heaven, that tempers ill with good, when it smote our wonted food,
Sent us bounteous growth of grain—sent to pauper slaves in vain!
We but asked in deadly need, 'Ye that rule us, let us feed
On the food that's ours': behold!—adder-deaf and icy cold!
Were we, saints of Heaven! were we—how we burn to think it—FREE!
Not a grain should leave our shore, not for England's golden store
They who hunger where it grew, they whom Heaven has sent it to,
They who reared with sweat of brow—they, or none, should have it now."*

* *Nation*, November 8th, 1846.

If the public safety be the supreme law of nations, there can be no doubt of what was proper to be done under the circumstances. When an invading army threatens the State, private property is sacrificed without scruple to military convenience; but the soil of a country is a species of private property, subject to special burthens. It is strictly charged with the support of the population engaged in cultivating it, and cannot, by any law or agreement, be relieved of this fundamental lien. The landlord's claim for rent does not accrue till the farmers and farm-labourers are supplied with daily bread; and the Irish proprietors, in snatching whatever the blight had spared, and carrying it beyond the reach of those who had a joint claim to a sustenance out of it, were guilty of shameful pillage. But an army of 20,000 British soldiers, from which Irish regiments were carefully weeded, was in Ireland to maintain unimpaired what were falsely called the "rights of property." And from Conciliation Hall the only exhortation heard was, "Be patient! be patient, and all will be well!"—an exhortation natural, and even salutary, in the first instance, but in the end false and murderous. Not patience, but vigilance at the outset, and in the end stubborn resolution and heroic wrath, befitted such a tremendous calamity.

Considerate Englishmen may ponder with advantage on the fact that the ruin which the famine brought upon Ireland could have been averted without ultimate injury or injustice to any one, had Ireland, like Belgium, at that time, or Hungary to-day, been free to manage

her own affairs. It is a sadder reflection for Irishmen that the disaster could not have occurred had the Repeal Association been maintained in its original vigour and authority. In the face of such a power as existed in 1843, to withdraw the food, which was the life of the people, would have been impossible. Had the attempt been made, a food riot would have been the beginning of a revolution. But the power of 1843 had been subjected to a steady depletion; and Ireland was about to pay a heavy penalty for the barren ambition of Mr. John O'Connell.

The gentry congratulated each other that they had resisted the temptation to become nationalists, for now all would be well. But even in their narrow and selfish sense, all was soon far from being well. The peasantry saw their fields swept bare of food by the combined action of the blight and the landlord; they heard no public counsel which promised any practical relief, and they flew to the Ribbon Lodge for succour. Agrarian crimes increased prodigiously. Homicides, house burnings, and midnight attacks doubled. In the Queen's Speech, at the opening of a new session, two facts were announced, between which the framers of it saw no connection, but which in truth stood to each other in the relation of cause and effect. Political agitation had been effectually checked in Ireland, and the disturbed state of the country demanded the immediate attention of Parliament. Sir Robert Peel was engrossed in the hard task of persuading English squires to accept free trade in corn, and had little leisure to scrutinise this

new difficulty. He was in the hands of Irish advisers who were the legitimate successors of the "Undertakers," and these generous counsellors assured him that the first necessity was a Coercion Bill; after the law had been vindicated he might begin to consider remedies. It was the established method, and it remains in force to this day. If Ireland is tranquil there is manifestly nothing to complain of: if she is turbulent, it does not consort with the dignity of Parliament to consider remedies till turbulence has been completely suppressed. A Coercion Bill of unexampled severity was proposed, and Lord John Russell on behalf of the Opposition sanctioned its introduction. If a terrible calamity threatened to destroy the English people by tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands, and popular outrages ensued, outrages such as have accompanied famine in every country which suffered from the scourge, it may be presumed that some other remedy than handcuffs and penal servitude would have been prescribed. Peel, indeed, at the same time was pressing the Repeal of the Corn Laws, but the Repeal of the Corn Laws was a measure of relief for English manufacturers and artisans, and did not touch the Irish question, except on the astonishing hypothesis that her granaries were first to be emptied of the corn grown at home, and then re-filled from foreign sources.

The union of the two English parties to promote coercion at such a moment is a fact which throws a penetrating light on the relation between England and Ireland. How is such an abnormal fact to be accounted

for? Lord Campbell, who associated with Englishmen of every rank in succession, during his slow ascent from the position of a writer of paragraphs for the daily papers to be Lord Chancellor of England, accounts for his party promoting a Coercion Bill in 1834 by motives which had lost none of their cogency in 1846. "They were probably tranquillised (he suggests, alluding to the risk of their becoming unpopular) by recollecting how essentially Ireland is hated by the English nation, and what a lenient view is taken of any measure which tends to degrade the mass of the Irish population." * A sentence, which duly pondered, will render all our clouded history luminous.

The Irish members hurried to London to resist coercion. Some of them were made welcome by the Whigs; O'Brien and one or two others were approached by a new party composed of seceders from Peel. Lord George Bentinck, in answer to a public question, manifestly pre-concerted, assured O'Brien that his friends would be willing to assent to a temporary suspension of the Corn Laws during the Irish famine, if the Irish members considered such a measure advantageous to their country; though the Protectionists could not understand how letting in foreign corn would benefit an island which was in itself a granary.

The *Times* in one of those erratic flights of inspiration, which sometimes lights up for a moment the dark Irish problem, and then fades away and is forgotten, urged that it was a mistake to govern Ireland rather on

* "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. ii., p. 27.

English than on Irish principles, by an English rather than by an Irish standard. The Irish were a people whose alacrity was not blunted by tyranny, whose courage was not extinguished by persecution; their spirit emerged strong and vigorous from the strife of the sword and the heavy weight of penal enactments. They had accomplished two moral miracles within a few years. The greatest triumph in the blazonry of history was that of Father Mathew. If O'Connell had been as truthful, single-minded, and unselfish as the priest, he would have won as signal a triumph. Even as it was, he exercised a sway so strong over his countrymen that the poor peasant stinted himself of his diminished substance, to pay tribute to his Liberator. Against a people like this, pains and penalties could not be employed with any hope of enduring success. But to describe their moral triumphs and their native virtues to Englishmen, if Englishmen prefer measures which tend to degrade the mass of the Irish population, was necessarily to preach to deaf ears.

Peel and Russell were at one on the necessity of coercion, but there was a force at work of which the veterans had not taken account. Among the Tories who declined to follow the Minister in his new departure towards Free Trade, there was an audacious man of genius, destined to cross his most-mature counsels. He was of humble though not obscure origin, and of a disparaged race; accidents which long compelled him to speak through some noble and accommodating mouthpiece. Of the Minister's bills the new party detested

one, and approved of the other; but Mr. Disraeli taught them not only to resist the measure they disliked by a system of parliamentary obstruction, never so effectually employed before, but to resist the measure they approved, the Coercion Bill, on the ingenious hypothesis that to arm a government with extraordinary power is in effect to express extraordinary confidence in it; and as Peel had forfeited their confidence he was not entitled to this tribute. The Irish members would have failed, as they had often failed before, to avert coercion, but for this unexpected ally.

That Irish members should desire to arrest the arm of the law, while outrages were doubling in number and atrocity, was a scandal to many complacent Englishmen over their daily papers of a morning. But it had long been ascertained with as much certainty as any result in the chart of causation, that agrarian crime sprang directly from intolerable distress, and systematic injustice. There lay in dusty, unread Blue Books the evidence of Government officials, and of exceptionally humane landlords, that the Irish peasant was the most patient in the world, that his crimes were traceable to wrongs which render life unendurable, and that they disappeared whenever he could provide his children with food and shelter. A *précis* of evidence on the chronic condition of the people was published at this time, and there is nothing like it in the annals of a civilised country. The agricultural labourers, amounting to more than half a million, lived on the worst description of watery potatoes with salt, or a little butter milk, as condiments.

"I am a baker (said an intelligent witness), and am in the habit of selling meal, flour, and bread, and I never knew a labourer or cottier who was able to purchase one or the other; they sometimes run themselves short, trying to buy meal for a few days at Christmas and Easter." "Many labourers who have large families (said another witness) are often four years without purchasing a coat, and their wives are frequently five or six years without purchasing either a cloak or a gown. . . . A poor man's child may be said to go naked from the age of ten months to that of ten years. Not more than six labourers' houses out of twenty contain a bedstead. A bedstead such as is commonly used, would be got for five shillings, and would continue fit for use for about ten years, in a dry cabin, but if the cabin be damp it would rot in five years. Very few cabins are staunch; not one in five. I would say that the remaining four families half lie on the ground."

Their wages were so scanty and uncertain, that they sometimes gladly exchanged their labour for two or three daily meals of potatoes.* Such a population lay dangerously near to the state of mind where desperation begins, but their offences were never other than those which famine breeds in every community. It was demonstrated from recent official returns that at this time crimes of wanton or malicious violence—such as highway robbery, rape, incendiarism, murder, manslaughter, and maiming cattle—were more numerous in England, in undisturbed tranquillity, than in Ireland,

* "You may estimate what a man's labour is worth, when a farmer can get as many men as he chooses to live with him and work for him all the year through at from 12s. 6d. to 15s. a quarter and his diet."—(Mr. P. M'Donnell.) Another witness (Mr. T. Burke) said that he has been offered sixty men to work for him for their diet alone; and a third (Maguire) states that he could find hundreds of men and their families who would hire themselves for the next two months, for as much potatoes each day as they could eat.

tortured with fear and suffering. It was under these circumstances that a Government exceptionally humane and enlightened was called on to provide for the necessities of the case; and the method by which they provided for it may well raise doubts whether an English Government can be anything else than an agent for the base passions which Lord Campbell attributes to the whole English people. The Coercion Bill of Sir Robert Peel would have been a hard measure if it were directed against Russian Nihilists in the present day. A man found out of his ordinary residence in any proclaimed district between sunset and sunrise was made liable to fourteen years' transportation. The police were authorised to break into a public house in such a district, and any person not an inmate or traveller found there became liable to the same tremendous penalty. The Lord Lieutenant was empowered to grant any sum he thought proper to any person injured, or to the relatives of any person murdered, or as a reward for the discovery of any crime, and to levy the amount off the district in question by his sole authority.

That these were powers which would not sleep in the hands of the public service, every one in Ireland knew. To illustrate their employment in former times, Lord Cloncurry mentioned two cases within his own experience, which are worthy to be preserved for the benefit of the historical student. A respectable farmer, named Kenny, living in an unproclaimed barony in Kildare, wanted change of a bank-note to pay his workmen. He walked to the nearest public-house to procure

it. The house was just within a proclaimed barony, and the sun had set, but it was broad daylight. While he was transacting this business the police came up and arrested him for being out of his house after sunset. He was tried and convicted at the next special sessions; though Lord Cloncurry attended and represented the actual facts to the Bench. The other case was even more significant. It is the practice in country places in Ireland for tailors to be boarded and lodged in farm-houses while they are employed making or repairing clothes for the family. An aged man, a tailor, was arrested under these circumstances. It was clearly proved he was an inmate of the house, living there according to the practice of his trade; but it availed nothing: he was sentenced to be transported, and the sentence was carried out.

But it was in vain to argue the case; the cry for coercion was heard on both sides of the Speaker's chair. The assurance with which a solid, respectable, educated middle-class political blockhead, whom accident has made a member of Parliament or a Minister, flies to coercion on the first symptom of discontent in Ireland, though coercion has failed a hundred times; may well make one patient with Virginian slave-drivers and Turkish pachas.

CHAPTER III.

AN EDITOR'S ROOM.

THE cradle of modern revolutions has not been the *caserne* of military conspirators, or the *vente* of a secret society, so commonly as the cabinet of a journalist. In France, Belgium, Hungary, and Italy national movements, consummated by the sanction of legislatures and the solemn ceremonial of religion, began in a room strewn with newspapers and glaring with gas, among a few men, whose white hands were stained with ink. In America a living poet has painted in colours that will not fade, a small chamber, "unfurnitured and mean," occupied by one friendless young man, with no possessions except a "dauntless spirit and a press," and has taught us that—

"'Twas there the freedom of a race began."

And the national movement in Ireland still found its chief inspiration and initiative in the dingy apartment where Davis had laboured a little before. I have enjoyed a wide experience of life since those days, but I have seen nothing better than that room, lighted up with the enthusiasm of youth devoted to a generous cause, and the gaiety of hearts at ease with themselves and the world. It was the seat of counsels free from

egotism or self-interest. They knew imperfectly, these young men, how ambition clambers to high places; but they were familiar with the inspiring story of Berkeley, abandoning wealth and station to teach the natives of a new continent; of Arnold, of Rugby, projecting to relinquish his career at home to train the sons of the Irish gentry in private virtue and public spirit; and of Tone and Addis Emmet and Thomas Davis, cheerfully putting away personal for public ends. It must not be supposed that their intercourse was pitched in any melodramatic key; it was familiar and cordial, free from priggery, and easily bubbling into badinage and laughter. So purifying is the passion of patriotism that I never saw one of these young men gravely exceed in wine, or heard one of them utter a coarsely licentious jest. The gaiety of our earlier meetings was maintained; for, though we knew that danger menaced us, danger is an inspiration to the young. The Celtic temperament, indeed, prompts men to meet it gallantly, perhaps a little ostentatiously. Still less did it divert us from our ordinary work. O'Connell once wrote to me at Belfast, before the *Nation* came into existence, a piece of practical advice, which contains a deeper wisdom than will commonly be found in his sayings. "Answer your enemies," he wrote, referring to some local broil, "as I do mine—by redoubling your exertions for Ireland." There is infinite peace and contentment in answering your enemies in this fashion. It lay at the root of our persistent refusal to engage in controversy with the mercenaries who assailed us. We did our

work, and left the result to time and Providence, which took adequate care of it in the end.

I can still recall, better than the transactions of yesterday, the prolific energy of that era, when everyone was doing something, or winning some recruit, for the national cause. It was generally work, which, if it were not done or projected in that narrow chamber, had small chance of being attempted elsewhere in Ireland, in that day. After the *Nation*, the "Library of Ireland" was our first care, and we sought aid for it wherever aid could be had. Dr. Gray undertook to write the "Constitutional History of the Irish Parliament"; Meagher, the "Williamite Wars," and another task for which he was fitter, the "Orators of the Irish Parliament"; Dillon, the "Life of Tone" (to complete Davis's book); Reilly, the "Penal Era"; Barry, the "Military History of '98"; Duffy, the "Great Popish Rebellion (1641)"; Sir Colman O'Loghlen, the "History of Irish Law and Lawyers"; and two interesting collections were pro-projected—a volume of "Foreign Song," from the translations of Clarence Mangan, and one of essays from the "Miscellanies of an Irish Priest," who had written historical and literary papers of high interest.

Maddyn was still willing to aid us in literary projects, and proposed to write a "Life of Dr. Doyle." Dr. Doyle was a prelate of singular manliness and liberality of character, distinguished by great gifts, among which a logic that struck like Thor's hammer, and a sincerity that was mesmeric, were conspicuous. He had differed with O'Connell on the proposed Poor Law, and other

public questions, and taught his special opinions with a freedom and power which would have been fatal, at that time, to any man on the popular side who was not protected by the episcopal purple. Even of him it was whispered, by defenders of the faith like the *Pilot*, that he was not quite orthodox. He was probably the greatest ecclesiastic the Catholic Church in Ireland had produced since the Reformation.

"Charlemont and his contemporaries" (Maddyn wrote, in reply, doubtless, to some suggestion of mine) "has been overdone. The subject has no interest for me. But I would write the life of Dr. Doyle *con amore*. There would not be a sectarian word, or a sectarian thought, in it. Of all modern Irishmen, I think him the most admirable—a far greater nature, though not a greater man, than O'Connell. I think I could do him justice, and that my life of him would be extremely popular.

"D'Israeli, in his 'Curiosities of Literature,' says—'I quote Dr. Arthur Browne, because an Irish philosopher is indeed a *rara avis*.' Now it strikes me, *non obstante* D'Israeli, that 'Lives of the Irish Philosophers' would be an attractive, readable, popular, and most useful volume. I would take our most eminent names, write their lives briefly, give an account of their works, and have interstitial chapters on topics cognate with the men sketched. In metaphysics, Hutcheson and Berkeley; political philosophy, Burke; natural philosophy, Molyneux, Kirwan (the chemist), Lloyd; intermingled with chapters interstitial. First, introduction, with remarks on progress of philosophy in modern times. Second, history of Trinity College, its good and evil pointed out, what it has done, and what it ought to have done, its want of moral zeal, its not awakening a thirst for science, &c.; yet a frank allowance for the difficulties arising from a distracted country. Then go down in historical order, and take the men as they come. Insert a chapter on the use of metaphysics, prior to life of Berkeley; remind my readers that

politics and patriotism did not prevent Molyneux from the noble pursuit of science, and that the cultivation of the higher philosophy did not prevent Berkeley from practical patriotism, and from striving according to his means to help the people around him. A chapter on the archæological historians of last century, and a chapter on the modern philosophers Lloyd, James McCullagh, and Dr. Kane. I would take the secondary men together. Thus, I would notice Baron Smith, Thomas Wallace, Q.C., George Ensor, in a chapter—the secondary men would not require more than long notes. Perhaps a chapter on the Royal Irish Academy, and the popular scientific institutes of Belfast and Cork."

I encouraged the second project, but not the first. The life of a Catholic bishop by a writer who had been, and had ceased to be, a Catholic, would be an awkward experiment. An English editor who recognised the sincerity of Father Faber, would scarcely select him to write a life of Cranmer, or even of Laud. Some of my friends regarded the proposal still more unfavourably. Pigot wrote a strong protest, and suggested an alternative which I would have gladly accepted:—

"With great pleasure I hear from J. O'H. that he will write a memoir of Dr. Doyle. How could any one dream of giving such a man to the mercies of a cold, peculiar, and uncatholic Maddyn? Of all works let this chiefest be done by a Believer. But make J. O'H. do it alone, and not join (as he proposes) a Protestant logic chopper in the same volume. Doyle is quite above the crowd, and, perhaps, in other circumstances would have been entirely a Catholic Swift, whose power he almost equals sometimes, and from whom he differs in being a thorough real Irishman as well as patriot.* If you form the

* This distinction is extremely just; Swift was in truth a Garrison patriot, and at bottom despised the Irish race.

Society for Irish History Publications, pray put me on it, and I will work on my return [to Ireland]. Almost my first enterprise was to try to make such a thing long ago."

MacNevin still wrote a little, and was engaged on a volume for the Library of Ireland, at a time when his mind (though neither he nor we understood the case) needed recreation and repose. I find among his correspondence at this time a note of encouragement on the book he was labouring to finish, the "Plantation of Ulster."

"I send for your preliminary studies a map of my native province. It is an encyclopædia in hieroglyphics. That congeries of dotted points fast by the Northern Sea, which looks like an ugly blot, is the great centre of manufacturing industry. That sprawling, black leech to the east, is Rosstrevor Bay, and lo! the rugged Omeath and the old keep of Narrow Water, and the wooded slopes and sunny waves of Rosstrevor and Warren Point rise to the memory. The printed word 'Downpatrick' (John O'Donovan will tell you the proper orthography) is equivalent to a panorama of Irish history, from the coming of the apostle from whom it takes its name, through the raids and revels of the Norman robber, De Courcy, down to the death of Thomas Russell—a man as nobly gracious and lovable it seems to me as that other black northern, Thomas ——. Tyr-Owen, Tyr-Connell, don't they sound to the ear like the roar of battle and the wail of disaster? But go to: a Connaught squireen never fostered on these glorious, pious, and immortal memories is unworthy to write the annals of Ulster." *

One of the remarkable group of public spirited men who professed themselves Federalists was willing to help our literary projects, but selected a singularly unsuitable

* Duffy to MacNevin. I blundered in describing Russell as a northern though he laboured chiefly in the north, he was born in Munster.

topic. Mr. Tighe, a Queen's counsel and county chairman, thought of writing the life of Sarsfield, a dashing soldier and the idol of the young nationalists. I welcomed his help as a visible sign of sympathy from a new class, but suggested some other topic. Pigot made a very just objection :—

"Tighe is, I believe, very able, and in knowledge and reflection perfectly competent, but Sarsfield requires *bone*, and such stuff as I fear his extreme gentlemanliness and refinement must have stripped him of. Speak to Hudson of him, and suggest this opinion of mine. He knows him very well. I think many better subjects can be assigned to him, and our soldiers kept for the sternest of us."

Mangan made suggestions which, if the pressure of political events had not pushed them out of view, would probably have been adopted.

"Did it ever occur to you that Maturin's 'Milesian Chief' —the most intensely Irish story I know of—might be brought out in a cheap form to advantage? Did you ever hear of Gamble, the author of 'Northern Irish Tales'? He made a powerful impression on me when I luxuriated (à la Werter) in my teens. His narratives are all domestic and exceedingly melancholy. Which county of Ulster gave him birth I wiss not, but in one of his tales he apostrophises the 'Mourne' as his own river—and in sooth he seems to have drunk royally of its waves, for he is very, very Mourne-full. Something might be done with him, too. Sherlock is the name of the Irish writer whom I spoke to you of some thirteen months back in the Dublin Library. His letters are particularly spiritual, and I think would bear a re-publication."

O'Brien was eager for an Irish history, long a *desideratum*, and even an Irish Cyclopædia. The former

project waited for materials mainly. Our history had been ruined by fable and exaggeration in the Milesian period, and Petrie, aided by Curry and O'Donovan, was engaged in researches which would enable it to be built anew on the solid basis of fact. Providence could scarcely send Ireland a higher gift than an Irish Thierry or Prescott, but the brooding calm in which a great history is born was impossible in a country tossing in the fever of political tumult. Something might be done, however, at once, especially with respect to the middle ages, and I assured him the attempt would be made.*

A stream of projects and suggestions, which showed the mind of the country alert and vigorous, still flowed in from distant correspondents. It was proposed to bring home our illustrious dead; Grattan from his "cold English grave,"† which his cold English friends had not marked by a bust or slab; Barry from St. Paul's; Luke Wadding from the Tiber; Usher from the unnoted corner of Westminster Abbey, where he mouldered; Duns Scotus from Cologne; Goldsmith from under the flag-stones of London; and our soldiers and scholars from France and Belgium, from Austria and Italy, from Spain, New Spain, and the United States; Hugh O'Neill from Rome; Hugh Roe O'Donnell from Valladolid; Nicholas French from Ghent; Sarsfield from Belgium;

* "The 'History of Ireland' can be done. I have for some time had an engagement from a number of my friends to do separate portions of it. This is the only way to have it done effectually. It is too heavy a task, being unbroken ground, for one man. I gave Mr. McGee a credit of £100 on the *Nation* office, to enable him to undertake part of the work; and you need not hesitate to make a suggestion of it, as we could have it ready for publication in a few months."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

† Byron.

Thomas Addis Emmet from New York. This was a project worthy of a free State to accomplish, but beyond the capacity of a State only struggling to be free. Another was more practicable. From the reign of Elizabeth to the reign of Victoria the only Irish university had no professor of the history, or of the native language, of the country. Latterly a Gaelic professor had been appointed, with a view to proselytism mainly it is to be feared, but history was still completely ignored. To have this omission supplied was a darling object with men who loved the university in which they had been trained, and they strongly urged it through the *Nation*. An Irish almanac was projected, which would associate dates with Irish, not English transactions. It was pointed out as a significant proof of the need for this work, that one of the existing Dublin almanacs gave a list not only of the sovereigns of England from the earliest period, but also of the sovereigns of Scotland, while of the long list of Irish kings before and after the invasion there was no notice. An anonymous letter of Pigot's in the *Nation* at this time contains a sentence which supplies curious evidence that from that creative era, the mother of projects and ideas, the present generation has derived much which it supposes to be its own invention or discovery.

"Whenever we choose to operate systematically in the present Parliament by insisting on full discussion for the thousand and one Irish questions, where will then be the time for regulating one-tenth of the English questions themselves? I do not offer this as a threat. Threats are not the arguments of a man really

in earnest. I do say, however, for the information of any Englishman that listens to me, that it is becoming a serious subject of reflection among us whether this course is not the only one consistent with our duty to Ireland, and that totally irrespective of English inconvenience." *

But there had been projects enough, and *acta* was encouraged rather than *agenda*. The man who accomplished something already approved of was assured that he would be more welcome than a monster-meeting of projectors. Several things accordingly got done. It had been pointed out that in Cork, Belfast, Drogheda, and elsewhere printers issued millions of yards annually of street-ballads, commonly nonsense daubed on tea-paper; and correspondents sent us specimens of songs from Banim, Callanan, and the "Spirit of the Nation," which they were gradually getting substituted for them. John Keegan, the peasant-poet, longed to share in this work, by substituting genuine Irish stories for the cheap books circulated among the people—mainly debasing French romances, which, in the shape of bad translations, were to be found on every book-stall; or English

* At a much later period Smith O'Brien stated the same idea with clearness and force, deriving it not from Pigot's letter, I am persuaded, but from his own experience and observation. "Now, after a parliamentary service which stretched over a period of more than seventeen years, I ought to know something about the resources of parliamentary parties and the means of parliamentary action. Founding my assertion upon this experience, I aver that a party consisting of sixty sincere and ardent Repealers, of whom I will assume that at least one-third would have been capable of taking a part in debate, could have so completely occupied the time devoted to legislation by the House of Commons with the discussion—*the fair and legitimate discussion*—of topics relating to Ireland, that the people and statesmen of England would have at length implored the Irish members to go home and debate the concerns of their country in an Irish Parliament; and such Parliament would have been restored to all its privileges by the common consent of both nations."

filth or nonsense, for the "Mysteries of London" found more readers than the "Bride of Lammermoor."

"After some months," he wrote to me, "I intend commencing a lengthened work on Ireland and her peasant population. Laugh and ask me, 'Where is Carleton?' No matter; he has not done all that can or ought to be done; nor, indeed, is what he has done——. But no, I dare not go on."

Under the influence of Hudson, we still collected national airs. Fashionable tourists to the Tyrol, who found an agreeable excitement in the genuine passion and simple art with which devout peasants present the story of the Redemption, may be interested to know that nearer home other devout peasants found inspiration in the same sublime tragedy. The correspondent who at an earlier date described himself as a "black-mouthed Presbyterian," but who at bottom was as Irish as Neilson or Porter, the black-mouthed Presbyterians of a former generation, wrote me at this time:—

"At wakes in the Glens [of Antrim] one of the most beautifully wild and pathetic ⲥⲁⲟⲓ̈ⲛⲉⲁⲧⲟⲥ used to be sung that ever was heard. Bunting has published some things of this sort, but the 'Lament' used in the Glens is worth them all. Three old women personate the three Maries weeping at the sepulchre of Christ, and a kind of responsive chant is carried on, until at certain parts they burst into one simple, wild, and indescribably grand chorus of grief. I heard it only once. The person who recited it was exceedingly unwilling to do so, but at last consented. No human heart could stand it. It might be worth your while to procure it by some means. All I recollect of it is the first line of the Virgin Mary's part:—

'Ϩⲟ ⲧⲉ ⲧ̇ⲙϩ ⲙⲟ ⲙ̇ⲁⲥⲣⲉ́ⲓⲛ ⲁⲛ̄ⲩⲁ ⲧⲩⲁⲟϩ̇ⲁⲓ ⲩⲟ?'*

* Literally, "What brought my own Son into this world?"

And then followed a description of the indignities to which He was exposed, and the painful death which He suffered."

Among other neglected Irishmen to be reinstated in the memory of their own people, some of the young poets naturally turned to the venerable hierarchy of Irish saints. The attempt interested a competent critic :—

"I am very glad," Dr. Russell, of Maynooth, wrote, "to see you have commenced the 'Legends.' They will, I am sure, tell well. I wish you would get 'Desmond' to versify the Legend of St. Bridget, which is in the Irish supplement of the *Breviary* of Feb. 1. It furnishes a most poetical theme, and one just suited to his pen—her beauty, the suitors suing for her hand, her prayer and subsequent deformity, her entering the cloister, the restoration of her beauty and taking the vow, and the miracle which is said to have accompanied it. All this he could do well, and it strikes me as very beautiful and poetical in the highest degree, even in its rude prose."

But the *Nation* was our first care, for all the other projects depended upon the *Nation* being strong and successful. One of the chronic troubles of an editor is that his favourite contributors perversely prefer attending to their own business rather than his, and I did not completely escape this trouble, though nobody could well have had less of it. One of my friends in London, instead of sending what was demanded of him, sent excuses, which were the more intolerable because it was impossible to denounce them as unreasonable or malingering.

"When I close my law-books," he wrote, "about half-an-hour before going to bed, I feel infinitely more inclined to turn

my chair to the fire and gossip awhile with P——, than to undertake any new mental labour; or if I take up a book, it is of a laxative, not a stringent character. I snatched time on Sunday to read Carlyle's 'Life of Schiller,' and your friend the 'Puppy Dog's'* 'Imagination and Fancy.' The latter is wonderfully ingenious and graceful, and I retract fully any contemptuous expression I may have been guilty of towards him. . . . The last *Nation* was not so good. Those verses of K——'s were cursed. You should not let the apparent raciness or Irishism of such things tempt you to insert them."

And again:—

"Your appeal for poetry is quite pathetic, but 'sorry I can't relieve you, my good man.' In what mood of mind are you for versifying after ——. No, I was going to put an absurd case for myself; of course *you* are just in the mood for writing truculent, ferocious, sanguinary ballads after imbruing your hands in the blood of Protestant and Papist to the extent you have been doing of late [I was writing the history of the great Popish Rebellion], but in what mood of mind can I be for versifying, who transfer mortgages during the day and read 'The Touchstone of Common Assurances' in the evening! Not to be thought of, *mon cher*. I would not, if I were you, be too anxious to have poetry in every number. It is quite out of the question for you to expect ever again to have such a quantity and constant succession of good verse as you had in the years 1843-44. Such things do not reproduce themselves. Even Davis, with his wonderful copiousness, had written little for a good while before his death. I question, too, if the verse is as eagerly looked for, or contributes as much to the popularity of the paper as it

* The allusion is, of course, to that cruel vitriolic bath into which Moore plunged Leigh Hunt for the unfortunate book which his publishers named "Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries." I had a great regard for Hunt, for his brave resistance to the scandals of the Regency and his charming criticism on books and writers, and for much personal kindness; but I found it hard to induce my friends to accept him *au serieux*.

did formerly. I know for my own part, instead of being the first thing as formerly, it is the last or nearly the last (for I sometimes look at the proceedings of the Association) that I read."

I did not agree with my friend that the impulse which had produced so marvellous a current was exhausted. So far was it from being exhausted, that it was at this time some of the most original and popular of the poets of the *Nation* made there first appearance.* A little later he admitted that the stream still flowed freely:—

"You have been really coming out very strong in poetry of late. I cordially coincide with all the praise my chum gave it in his letter to you a day or two ago, but I don't retract what I said before, and Mitchel expressed precisely the same opinions as mine in the very last letter I had from him. It was a knowing dodge of you to knock me down with the poetry of a particular number, and then call me slanderer. But I'll keep a sharp eye over you."

McGee in London as a political correspondent was, it seemed to me, a force running waste. His fine capacity and genuine enthusiasm in Irish studies were lost in Parliamentary penny-a-lining. I suggested more suitable work, to which he promptly turned.

"You advise me to sink St. Stephen's, which I do with all my heart. If I fastened so tenaciously on the Imperial Legislators, Mr. Mitchel was partly to blame; for he advised, from the first, that I should let the dead rest [postpone historical inquiries] until vacation, and, as he said, continue to manifest 'a pretty thorough contempt for their damned Parliament.' I think

* To wit, Speranza, McGee, Martin MacDermot, Mary, Thomasine, and Eva.

I have done so; and now for the 'literary and historical' things I am to do. If, as I imagine, you wish a sketchy series of letters on the Irish department of the Library of the Museum, or the National Gallery and Westminster Abbey, I think I could do it. Moreover, I will dine with you, if you wish it, at the Boar's Head Tavern, with Sir John Falstaff, and attack the Tower of London as fiercely as Sir Thomas Wyatt himself. Occasionally, I might condescend to return to St. Stephen's, but things of to-day and yesterday may not be mixed together in the same letter."

He was bent on writing a history of Ireland, and also on versifying its legends and traditions in chronological order—a work which, if effectually done, would be equivalent to a history in verse. But it could only be effectually done, it seemed to me, by many men, and at various times, not at all by one man as a species of task-work; and I discouraged the attempt.

"I do not like the notion of your undertaking to versify over so wide a space; two-thirds of such a work would necessarily be bad. Seize the great events—the events that impress your imagination—and do not touch the others. There is something in poetry that abhors a systematic design like this of your Legends and Traditions, to versify right or wrong. I would rather see you do ten great ballads than ten hundred middling ones."*

Reilly suggested a book on the model of Dumas' "Historic Crimes":—

"Irish history," he said, "abounds with subjects; for instance, the poisoning of Owen Roe by Lady Coote (the Irish Brinvilliers), the murder of MacMahon [of Monaghan], the life and death of

* McGee's correspondence. The representatives of Thomas Darcy McGee returned my letters to him, for the purpose of this book.

the English O'Reilly, the robbery of the Byrnes of Ranelagh, the crime of Luttrel, the fate of Baldeary O'Donnell, the vice-royalty of Strafford, the life of Thomas Reynolds, poisoner, gambler, perjurer, traitor, 'London grand juryman,' &c. In fact, the history of Ireland may be written as English crimes."

The purpose of all these labours was interpreted to the people from time to time, by one or other of the young writers. McCarthy taught the uses of a national literature, and the noble and unselfish reward it aimed to win, with a persuasiveness that recalled Davis. A great literature, he said, was either the creation or the creator of a great people. The forms of loveliness and strength revealed to the inspired eyes of Homer, when he sung to shepherds and rude wayfaring men, assumed a dress of ivory or marble beneath the hands of Phidias; and when Athens arose—

> "——— a city such as vision
> Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
> Of battlemented clouds, as in derision
> Of kingliest masonry,"

—it was but an embodiment of the magnificent and consummate beauty which his songs had rendered familiar to Greece. Among the millions of men who inhabited England from the Creation downwards, there was one, her chief treasure and ornament, whose labours she would not barter for sunny India or snowy Canada, for the pastoral wealth of Australia or her sugar islands in the West—a poor player or struggling manager during a great part of his life. And Cervantes, the maimed soldier of Lepanto, and Calderon, the secluded

priest of Toledo, had given Spain greater glory and more lasting possessions than the conquests of Cortes or the Cid. In Ireland, literary men must be content with a limited celebrity and moderate reward, that they might endeavour to do for their country what Scott had done for Scotland, and what Schiller and Goethe had done for Germany. Why should not the Barrow and the Bann be as famous as the Clyde? Why should not the majestic Shannon, or the wild Blackwater, which rivals the Rhine in beauty, rival it also in fame? The work had begun, and must be continued, till the beautiful face of Ireland, like the face of Undine, was illuminated with the soul of poetry.

Meagher expressed a kindred sentiment in a more rhetorical spirit:—

"We do homage to Irish valour," he said, "whether it conquered on the walls of Derry, or capitulated with honour behind the ramparts of Limerick. We award the laurel to Irish genius whether it lit its flame within the gates of Old Trinity, or drew its inspiration from the sanctuary of St. Omer's. 'We must tolerate each other,' said Henry Grattan, the inspired preacher of Irish nationality, 'or we must tolerate the common enemy.' . . . An honourable forbearance towards those who censure us, a generous respect towards those who differ from us, will do much to diminish the difficulties that impede our progress. Let us cherish the rights of all our fellow-countrymen—their rights as citizens, their municipal rights, the privileges which their rank in society has given them, the position which their wealth has purchased or their education has conferred, and we will in time, and before long, efface the impression that we seek national power with a view to crush these rights, to erect a Church ascendency, to injure property, or create a slave class."

Evidence that the work already done was successful, came to us in the shape of recognition of Davis at his true value in distant or unfriendly places. Many of the transatlantic Irish associations passed votes of sympathy with his friends; the New York Repealers agreed to wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days; the Boston Repealers resolved to erect a monument to his memory on Bunker's Hill—a work which, I fear, still remains to be accomplished. But the most significant testimony came from the chief organ of the Protestant gentry and Protestant Church in Ireland. The young men might well believe they had not laboured in vain when the *Dublin University Magazine* described the mission of their leader among his countrymen:—

"To teach them justice, manliness, and reliance on themselves—to supplant vanity on the one hand and servility on the other by a just self-appreciation and proper pride—to make them sensible that nothing could be had without labour, and nothing enjoyed without prudence—to teach them to scorn the baseness of foul play, and that if they were to fight they should fight like men and soldiers—these were the lessons which he appeared a chosen instrument for imparting."

I have found among the papers of that period a few pages of "Office Agenda," a sort of programme of daily work. To any other eye than mine they would probably be as obscure as Ogham; but the least scratch made for the purpose of the hour can still summon back from the dim Hades of memory the men and events with which it was concerned. A fragment of these memoranda will realise the fulness of life which characterised the time,

and the purpose which every labour was intended to promote, better than an elaborate description :—

Jan. 16th, 1846.—Conference at Hudson's, with the Professors, this evening. [In the Celtic Society we aimed to unite, for the first time, the Professors of the National Catholic College with the Professors of the Dublin University, and in the end the Council was constituted in this way. Though Maynooth was not only the National College, but had proved itself, by work done, one of the first theological colleges in the Christian world, recognition of this sort, outside its own domain, was not common. One of the rules of the Celtic Society, which might put Conciliation Hall to shame by its practical sense, was that "No editorial expression of opinion or interference, religious or political, shall be introduced into any publications of the Society." How this project was regarded by our vigilant friendly critics in London will be seen from a fragment of their correspondence :—"I do believe in my conscience (though not for the world would I breathe it to Tierna*) that we have far better times before us (though Lord knows how far before us) than if we had succeeded by the hurrah of 1843. Some years more work in the way of getting Catholic Bishops and Protestant Fellows of T.C.D. to work on the same board for Irish objects, and shan't we make a country of it? I say *we*, as a spectator and sympathiser should." And again—"He is a wonderful boy, the same young gentleman [Young Ireland]. Infidel, rebel that he is, he has contrived to get one arm linking with the loyal Protestants, and the other round the neck of Popery and Peter Dens. If he cannot coalesce with truculent dishonesty, he can't help it, that's all."]

17th.—To visit Marsh's Library. [Marsh's Library is connected with St. Patrick's Cathedral, and in those days was cold, dusty and desolate, but contained some rare books on 1641, a period I was then studying.]

——, 11 o'clock.—To go with A. O'H. to see portrait of R. O'M. [R. O'M. was Roger O'More, the hero of 1641, whose contemporary portrait in the family of Mr. More O'Farrell I went to see with his friend and solicitor, Mr. Arthur O'Hagan.]

——, 3 o'clock.—To meet Mr. C., *in re* C. Mag. [Mr. C. was Rev. George Crolly, a professor in Maynooth, who projected a Catholic magazine, which was afterwards published by Mr. James Duffy, and was a serviceable organ of historic nationality. Mangan, McGee, McCarthy, Father Meehan, Williams, and other writers of the Young Ireland school, were contributors to it.]

23rd.—M. S. to call at the office with Mr. Moriarty. [M. S. was Moore Stack, who had been a successful actor on the London stage, under the theatrical name of Moore. Reared in a profession where conceit bordering on insanity is not an unknown phenomenon, he was a singularly modest, genial, honourable, and lovable man. He wished to make me acquainted with a young priest who was his relative and friend; a man destined to a remarkable career in the Irish Church, and the same referred to above as a Professor of All Hallows.]

* Tierna MacMorris was the name under which one of the chums was supposed to be represented in the satirical novel of "The Falcon Family, or Young Ireland."

31st.—To dine with M. C., and go with her, S. H., M. and T. R. to see H. F. in *Rosalind*. [M. and T. R. were Mitchel and Thomas Reilly, and H. F., Helen Faucit, whom the best writers of the *Nation* constantly interpreted to audiences only beginning to recognise her genius.]

February 22nd, Sunday, 10 o'clock.—W. C., and t'other W.C., T. L., S. B., R. O. G., M. J. B., W., McC., Mgr., Fr. M., M., T. R. and A. O. H., to breakfast. [The initials of the three first guests represent William Carleton, William Cogan, and Timothy Lane, who were friends but not Young Irelanders; S. B. was Samuel Bindon, a new recruit at this time. The other initials scarcely need explanation.]

March 7th, 8 o'clock.—Sub-committee of the Club with me. John and Wilson Gray, Stritch, Bryan, Mitchel, Meagher, MacCarthy, and Barry. [The lofty design and gorgeous uniform of the 1782 Club belonged to an era which was dead, but it contained the best men in the national movement—men, many of whom could not be frightened or cajoled, and we kept it alive for useful ends.]

April 8th.—To call on W. H., that we may complete the arrangement for J. D. [James Duffy found himself pressed by commercial difficulties, and was disposed to lighten his ship by throwing over half the cargo, including some books of national importance. Finally Mr. Hudson lent him a few hundred pounds, and I did as much, and so he got afloat again.]

May 12th, 10 o'clock.—To meet a deputation from the chapel. ["From the chapel," *i.e.*, from the printers' chapel, as their trade conference is named. The printers of the *Nation* sent me two demands under the implied threat of a strike. One was that poetry, of which there was a great quantity in the *Nation*, should be charged as prose; that is to say charged as if the lines were full, instead of being, as often happened, only half or two-thirds the breadth of the column. The second was that when advertisements were continued from week to week (which was always done at a reduced charge) they should each week be paid for in the printers' bill as if they were set up anew. I was the constant friend of artisans struggling for their rights with employers; but the claim to be paid for work they did *not* do was not a right but a wrong, and I peremptorily refused both proposals. I told them if they struck I would suspend the *Nation* for a fortnight, till boys could be trained to print it, and never receive back any man who left me under such circumstances. The claim was not persisted in.]

——, 2 o'clock.—To see Godkin with Martin and McGee. [There was a project on foot to establish a Protestant Repeal journal in Belfast, of which it was proposed to make Mr. Godkin, a Congregationalist minister, who had written one of the Repeal prize essays, editor. The writers of the *Nation* had attempted the difficult and all but impossible task, in a country like Ireland, of treating Catholic and Protestant interests on the same footing, and in return had got assailed as infidels; the other Repeal papers were for the most part as uniformly Catholic in their sympathies as if they were exclusively sectarian organs, and they offended and repelled Protestants. The Conservative journals were *strongly* unionist, and strongly and even offensively anti-Catholic. To have Protestant nationalists addressed in language which would honestly sympathise with their religious opinions wherever it was necessary, would be a manifest gain, and this is what we aimed to accomplish. The contest with Conciliation Hall, however, when it arose, interrupted the design.]

——, 3 o'clock.—To go with Webb to the R. D. S. [P. R. Webb was

a young barrister and a close friend and confidant of Davis in his private affairs. I went with him to the Royal Dublin Society Library, to examine an invaluable collection of pamphlets of the Commonwealth period, known as Thorpe's Tracts.]

May 5th.—To find a hermitage at Dundrum. [I was responsible for the volume of the Library of Ireland to be published in August. I had been trying to write it in snatches of leisure with only moderate success, and I determined to leave the *Nation* in charge of Mitchel for a couple of months, and work in the country, only visiting the office once or twice a week.]

June 6th.—Answer to R. H. R. *in re* L. H. [At this time the strange experiment was being made in London of a morning paper with the popular novelist of the day for editor, and men of a certain distinction in letters filling its chief employments. Its Dublin correspondent was an epic poet, the author of "Orion," and he had just announced that a dramatic poet, Leigh Hunt, had written an essay in a late number of the new paper on the Ballad Poetry of Ireland.]

19th.—To call on McGlashan *in re* "Torlogh O'Brien" and his anonymous project. [Mr. Le Fanu, who was writing his national story of "Torlogh O'Brien," asked me to look at the proofs, and consider whether he had done justice to Sarsfield (the popular hero of that era), and Mr. McGlashan, his publisher, wrote me a note on that subject, which possesses a historic interest from the use he made of the correspondence a couple of years later:—"My dear sir,—Many thanks for your note and your valuable suggestions. I have sent it to Le Fanu. I wish you could call here the first time you are in D'Olier Street. An excellent project has been submitted to me, which stands a chance of being marred in the execution, and I am anxious to consult you what is best to be done.—Yours faithfully, James McGlashan.—June 16th."

The "project" was probably the publication of Mangan's *Anthologia Germanica*, a task I had frequently urged on him, and which at length got accomplished by my undertaking to pay £50 for a hundred copies for myself and friends. Mr. McGlashan's letter on the subject has a certain literary interest, and, like the former one, is still more remarkable for the use to which the correspondence was turned:—

"I calculate that the printing, binding, and advertising of Mangan's 'Anthology' will cost us nearly £100. Our view was to publish the book, sell as many as possible, and give Mangan an equal share of the profits, and in this manner I conceive he would be more benefited than by any definite sum we

could afford to give him. However, as our wish is, as much as yours can be, to serve Mangan, without incurring any unnecessary risk, suppose you pay Mangan £25 in the meantime, and the remainder to us until the expenses of the book have been covered. Could I be sure the volumes would sell equal to their merits, there would be little difficulty about an arrangement very profitable to Mangan, but I cannot forget they are verse, and the public took ten years to buy one small edition of Anster's 'Faust,' a book which all at once occupied a very high position in the literary world."

—— T. R. to come in the evening, with the correspondence about the future vols. [I had appointed T. D. Reilly editor of the "Library of Ireland," to have someone responsible for the successive volumes being ready for the press, and perhaps as a decent pretence for a little pocket money. But the contributors thought the editor too juvenile, and perhaps too meddlesome, and the experiment had to be dropped.]

20th.—To send "Miss Barrett" to McC., C.'s French Rev. to R. O. G., his "Cromwell" to Mrs. C., "Anacreon in Dublin" to T. R., "Retzsch's Outlines" to S. H., and "Festus" to Meagher. [I endeavoured to keep up the practice commenced by Davis of making our books a circulating library.]

—— 3 o'clock.—To meet Carleton, and hear his proposal from the *Warder*. [I have forgotten the nature of the proposal, but the young Protestant men of letters connected with the *Warder* had always friendly feelings and sympathy with "Young Ireland."]—Answer Robert Tyler. [Mr. Tyler was son of the ex-President of the United States, who had given Ireland such signal encouragement in 1843.* He was still willing to be of use to the Irish cause.]—Consult Webb about the mediæval papers. [I wished the Celtic Society, of which Mr. Webb was one of the honorary secretaries, to publish memoirs and correspondence connected with Irish affairs after the Reformation, instead of confining themselves exclusively to Gaelic MS. There were collections of peculiar historic value in the Burgundian Library at Brussels, and at Rome in the Vatican, and in the Irish Franciscan Monastery founded by Luke Wadding, and doubtless in Madrid and Salamanca; and there were books published in Paris or Louvain, of which only a copy or two were known to be in existence, very suitable for reprints. They agreed to do so, but did not act on their decision. Some of the Louvain tracts were reprinted in the Library of Ireland, but the general design was only carried out twenty years later by Mr. Gilbert, on his own impulse doubtless, without any relation to the original proposal.]

To see Hudson about the *Annuaire*, and J. D. about Griffin for McG. [Hudson proposed at this time to publish an *Annuaire* of the Celtic Society, such as continental societies of the same character issue; and James Duffy was about to publish a new edition of Griffin's novels, of which he had purchased the copyright from the author's family. I pro-

* See "Young Ireland," p. 318.

posed McGee as editor of both undertakings, which was agreed to; but the *Annuaire* perished in the political storm near at hand. To visit Hudson in those days and see him returning from his official duties only to plunge into new labour—labour which would yield him neither reward nor recognition in any vulgar sense, but to which his life and fortune were unsparingly devoted—to see his sweet, serene countenance light up with interest in any project which promised to be of service to the country, was a wholesome antidote to the baseness and selfishness which so often ranted in the disguise of public spirit elsewhere. In the Hudson family a succession of distinguished Irishmen had found friends. It gave a comrade to Thomas Moore, to Wolfe Tone, and to Thomas Davis. William Eliot Hudson, its representative at this time, did habitually, out of his private fortune, in a provincialised city, what opulent nobles and prince-merchants have sometimes done in free States, largely fostered native literature and art. In '43 he proposed to lay down his office and join the Repeal Association; but O'Connell thought the sacrifice disproportionate to the gain, and dissuaded him.]

In an engagement-book of the same period, I find a prodigious record of social meetings among my friends. Breakfasts, dinners, dances, excursions to Howth and Dundrum occupied a larger share of my time than festivities ever did before or since. For though the young men were busy with grave affairs, their lives were not robbed of the sentiment and romance proper to their age. There was much wooing and some marrying in that day. Our chief social enjoyment, however, was still the weekly supper. A new recruit of a peculiarly practical spirit thought there was too much badinage, and proposed that the jokes of McCarthy and Barry should be considered permissible while tea was being served, after which they should be peremptorily voted out of order!*

* Of the pranks of that day two or three linger in my memory. Williams left on his writing-table an experiment in the heroic ballad in which after long labour he had made small progress; no more, indeed, than a solemn opening:—

Far in Kinkora's halls of splendour
The famous palace of King Boroimhe ——

Opinion sometimes comes foaming and surging like a tide; sometimes it steals into new channels, as silently as health returning to the cheek of the invalid. The tide of popular enthusiasm had surged and foamed in 1843, and was long on the ebb, but the silent current of thought and sympathy had not slackened in places which political action could scarcely reach, and which Conciliation Hall could no more influence than a gas-

Next day he found that some beneficent spirit had completed this stanza in his absence—

Mrs. O'Brien sat by the fender
Gloomily beating the devil's tattoo!

With Meagher there came into the party one of his schoolfellows, P. J. Smyth (the present gifted member for Tipperary), who was long noted chiefly for his devotion to his friend. None of us had the smallest idea that he would one day develop oratorical powers which were destined to win the applause of the most critical audience in the world. His devotion to his friend was a subject of frequent pleasantry. "Don't talk," McCarthy exclaimed one day, "of—

The love of the moth for the star,
Of the day for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow;
The craze of Pat Smith for Tom Meagher
Beats all of them hollow, *begorra!*

Mitchel suffered from frequent fits of asthma, and at one time it seemed as if he must succumb to these constant attacks. There is a characteristic touch in one of his notes at this period worth preserving:

"After this day I won't appear in the office till Monday fortnight, although I shan't leave home probably till the end of next week. Be prudent, be firm, be judicious, and remember that he who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy." The formula which he echoes was an habitual exhortation of O'Connell's to the people, and Mitchel loved the sly pleasantry of saying something which would excite laughter by its oddity in his mouth. There was a squib in *Punch* ridiculing the Anglophobia of Young France (who attributed every mischance to English influence), a fragment of which he often recited, probably because it was the sort of pleasantry which might be directed against himself. The refrain was—

Oh non, non, non, c'est Albion, c'est l'or de l'Angleterre.

If any one accounted for the potato blight or the cabals in Conciliation Hall by natural causes Mitchel interposed with a mocking smile—

Oh non, non, non, c'est Albion, c'est l'or de l'Angleterre.

lamp controls the tides. There were more books published in Ireland at this time, it was computed, than in Scotland—a quite unprecedented circumstance—and they were all coloured more or less with the new opinions. Irish art, long slumbering, seemed to have risen anew, like an awakened angel, radiant and strong. Ireland had produced great artists, but they were mostly absentees. At this time, John Hogan, a sculptor of fertile and original genius, and F. W. Burton, a painter of the same calibre, were making a generous experiment to live by their art at home; an experiment full of interest to men who believed that Ireland, if she were free, would rear merchants like the Medici, and nobles like the Colonna, to foster native art. Constant efforts were made to inspire the wealthy with this ambition, and a movement was commenced to create Schools of Design in Dublin and Cork—a project accomplished in later days.* Dublin had eminent men of science, but no recognised Irish school. Hamilton, Graves, Lloyd, Robinson, Stokes, and Kane were known wherever science was cultivated, but known as Englishmen. There were now few Irish gentlemen who did not sympathise with the desire of the Young Irelanders that these eminent men would do for their own country what Adam Smith,

* This renaissance had to contend in art, as in every other department of intellectual labour, with barbarous prejudice. An Art Union founded for the "encouragement of Irish art and artists in Ireland," engraved pictures, not from Maclise, Barry, or Forde, but from Corregio and Wilkie; and reproduced Dutch market-boats, and French fishing-boats, English seaports, and Italian peasants, as if Ireland had no landscapes, or literature, or history. Yet one engraving from an Irish picture, Burton's "Blind Girl at the Holy Well," was pecuniarily and artistically the most successful of their experiments.

Hume, and Robinson, and in later times Dugald Stewart and Brown, had done for Scotland. The *Dublin Review*, always Catholic, had now become a skilful guide to Irish students in history and fiction; the *Dublin University Magazine*, always intensely Protestant, shook off a corps of third-rate English contributors enlisted by Lever, and replaced them by Carleton, Mangan, Ferguson, Le Fanu, M. J. Barry, and other Irishmen. "Torlogh O'Brien" was issuing monthly from the same house, with generous and graphic pictures of the struggle under James and Tyrconnell; and Lever, who had left the country, sent from the Continent a story which might have been published as a *feuilleton* in the *Nation*.* And a new and more methodic edition of Dr. Madden's "United Irishmen" was issued—a book which is a marvel of patient research and loving enthusiasm.

These successes were won against tremendous odds. In England and on the Continent national culture was promoted by the State and by great nobles; in Ireland the State deliberately starved or suppressed it. An Ordnance Survey, which was collecting inestimable materials for a knowledge of the resources, soil, and antiquities of the country, was suddenly suspended by Sir Robert Peel, and has never been revived. The British Museum got an endowment of between thirty

* The story was "The Knight of Gwynne." Lever long resisted the spirit of nationality, but completely ceded to it in the end; one of the last papers he wrote, a quarter of a century later, was a vindication of Ireland's right to self-government. This paper, written for, but rejected by *Blackwood's Magazine*, Professor Galbraith made public after Lever's death.

and forty thousand pounds a year; in Ireland, the equivalent for the British Museum got £300.* Parliament, a few years earlier, had refused to apply the surplus funds of the Established Church to the purpose of public education; and when Mr. Wyse, at this time, brought under its attention the state of legal education in Ireland, the House was counted out. The "national system"—so the scheme of State schools was named—was worked with the unconcealed purpose of repressing nationality. The staff of teachers—amounting to nearly 4,000—who were training half a million of the new generation, were living on wages varying from a pound to thirty shillings a month, paid by the State, supplemented by school fees, miserable in amount and hard to collect. The school-books were poor and foreign in spirit from the beginning, and had been gradually weeded of all food for the national spirit, with a care that would scarcely be surpassed in Russian or Prussian Poland.† To keep the lamp for ever burning in such a country, to teach assiduously to those pupils what the State basely decreed that they should not learn, was a pious and generous, but unspeakably difficult, task.

* "The various sums of money voted by the Imperial Parliament for the advancement of learning and the arts in Great Britain, during the last seven years, bear to the amount granted during the same period for like purposes in Ireland the proportion of more than twenty to one. Your lordship will allow me, without arrogance, to observe, that one to twenty is not the ratio in which Irish intellect contributes to the advancement of the English name in the republic of letters."—Letter of Samuel Ferguson, M.R.I.A., to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

† The "Exile of Erin." Walter Scott's "Invocation of Patriotism," and the "Downfall of Poland"—three poems by Scottish poets—were excluded as dangerous; and a description of the Lakes of Killarney and the Giant's Causeway followed.

One of the keenest pleasures of the Editor's Room was the correspondence of our absent colleagues, who wrote with a frankness and unreserve of cordial friendship, and a vigilant interest of partners in a great enterprise. Some of us had made the personal acquaintance of Thomas Carlyle, who taught us much he never designed to teach, but little or nothing of his special opinions, and was a constant subject of affectionate interest. One of my friends in London wrote at this time:—

"I re-inclose to you at once Thomas's letter [Mr. Carlyle was commonly spoken of among the young men as True Thomas], having copied the same, that I may read it over and over again, whenever I grow sceptical or disheartened about Ireland. It is emphatically the highest tribute ever paid you, and so I am sure you feel it. What an encouragement to work, as, please God, we all will.

"Did I tell you in any of my late letters that I spent last Sunday evening with Lucas. He asked me were my hopes in our cause as sanguine as ever? I said *not*, if by that was meant hopes of swift success, but that strong hope of ultimate success I had; based on the profound conviction of the truth and justice of the cause, which I thought would make way not among Irishmen merely, but Englishmen themselves. He said he had very slight, or at least very distant, expectations of Englishmen coming round to Repeal as a matter of justice, the way they, or at least a large body of them, did to Catholic Emancipation; that the latter was in accordance with the spirit of the time, and the tendency of men's ideas, but that the former is directly adverse to the general current of things, which is towards centralisation, not localisation; the protest against it being of the feeblest kind. I then asked him what *he* thought about means, and he said if we were resolved to make Repeal our goal, that, putting the sword out of the question, he saw

nothing better than to continue wearying the soul out of the English; the present policy in fact *well* and *ably* and *heartily* carried out; that the spectacle of seventy or eighty members persevering in secession from Parliament, saying that they had no business there, and organising themselves into a parliament at home, would be something so strange that the English Government would not know how to deal with it, and might be at last driven to legalise our localisation." *

Carlyle's Cromwell was published, and the same correspondent wrote :—

"Do you review it—*you*—I could not help plunging into the Irish parts; there is a damnable deal of truth in what he says, but also I incline to think considerable ignorance and prejudice. Think of him believing, with such a history as we have had, that Ireland could have been Cromwellised into Presbyterianism! And what he says, too, of the Cromwellian aristocracy being better than our old one! Not a word of griping avarice, black, bitter bigotry, and malignant hatred of the Irish. Do you review it; say the truth and the whole truth."

But I was hidden in the Dublin mountains, striving to write history, out of hearing of political tumult, and Cromwell was reviewed by Mitchel, with notable insight and discrimination. The same correspondent reported that Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle (who treated such of the

* Lucas afterwards formulated his theory with great clearness and force in the *Tablet* of April, 1846 :—"The *rationale* of agitation is simply this: if a man treats me ill, and keeps from me what is mine, I right myself by force, if I can; if I cannot, I roar at him, obstruct him, and refuse to give him a moment's peace till he consents to right me. If he complains of this conduct, and tells me I ought to discuss the matter calmly; I treat him according to his intention. If I think he really wants to be convinced of the fairness of my claims in order to do me justice, I am ready to state my case as quietly as he pleases. But if I am of opinion that he only wants to cheat me into giving him peace for a while, then, as I have evidence by this that my pertinacity is effecting its object, I redouble my clamour till he gives in."

young men as she knew with constant and gracious kindness) were content with the treatment it had received.

"They were greatly pleased with Mitchel's review, which they took to be yours, and Lucas couldn't enlighten them. They both considered it honest and manly in the extreme, especially the way the *English* Cromwell was judged; not, as they said they might naturally have expected, by the light of what we consider him to have done in Ireland. The book has sold better than any of his previous ones. He is preparing a new edition for the press, the first being all gone, and he intends, mark this, to send *you* the sheets of the Irish part, that you may mark any errors of fact that it contains, so you have a great opportunity in your hands. Lucas was very glad when I told him the article was M.'s, for he said you did not require anything to raise you in the opinion of his Chelsea friends, and that it was well to let them see that there was another man in the country, a feeling in which I heartily sympathised, as you will."

My friend was somewhat mistaken; it was not errors of fact I was invited to point out, but errors of topography or nomenclature, which the careless spelling of the period was liable to produce. I took occasion, however, to represent the Irish estimate of certain men on the Irish side to Mr. Carlyle, especially Owen Roe, not altogether without effect. This was Carlyle's letter:—

"*Chelsea, Jan.* 19, 1846.

"I am about to do what to another kind of man than you I should myself regard as a very strange thing: I am sending you the 'Curse of Cromwell' to get it *improved* for me! The case is, I am very busy preparing a second edition of that book; and am anxious, this being the last time that I mean to touch it, to avoid as many errors as may be avoidable. In the Irish

part of the business I could not, after considerable search and endeavour, procure any tolerable Irish atlas; and in spelling out the dreadful old newspaper letters from that scene, which are nearly indecipherable sometimes, I felt now and then my footing by no means secure. Other errors there may be which an intelligent punctual man, acquainted with the localities, might put me on the way of rectifying; but those of the names of places and such like he would himself rectify. For geographical corrections I see nothing that I can do so wise as depend upon you and your help. . . . Excuse all this. I would like much to talk weeks with you on those subjects: for it seems to me, as I have said already, Ireland, which means many millions of my own brethren, has again a blessed chance in having made a man like you to speak for her, and also (excuse the sincerity of the word) that your sermon to her is by no means yet according to the real gospel in that matter."

One may catch, in the London correspondence, a glimpse of a man who has been dear to his countrymen since they came to understand the silent patriotism of his life; a life like Hudson's, with the larger scope and deeper insight which belong to a man of genius:—

"Sam Ferguson* has been here on his way to the Continent. He spent about four hours with us on Sunday. Poor fellow, he looks very ill. What a terrible feeling of doubt and insecurity one gets about our true men. Rome, I trust, will bring him round—not to Romanism, but to health. He is going stocked with introductions to cardinals, legates, and other great dignitaries of the Church, who, I hope, for the honour of the religion, will treat him well. I never happened to meet Ferguson before, and I was excessively pleased with him, and, with all my previous opinion of him, was scarcely prepared to find him so very national. He is hopeful beyond measure for the country, says there is a strong manly intellect growing up in

* The present Sir Samuel Ferguson.

Ireland, which will trample the emasculated mind of England under foot. God send—if it be true, it tallies well with your grand scheme."

The spirit in which the young men desired to conduct the contest with England, a spirit of manly sincerity which neither relied upon false charges or fictitious promises, is illustrated by other letters of this period:—

"There is an article in to-day's *Tablet apropos* of your 'Irishmen in England,' which in my judgmen tis exceedingly true. I didn't like your article at all, whoever wrote it. But if you agree with me as to the truth and good sense of Lucas's reply, you might say as much. Our perpetual tendency ought to be to base our cause upon all truth, and kick lies from under it unscrupulously."

And again a little later:—

"John Murray's article [the article already referred to], though very clever, was shockingly coarse; false, too, in some things (*e.g.*, pretending to cull the phrase 'surpliced ruffians' out of the two or three last weeks' numbers of the *Times*). Again, Mitchel (I presume), in his article on the Sikhs, speaks of the blow which is to destroy the English empire in the East as likely to be fought 'nearer home.' Heaven and earth! what is the meaning of this? With about as much practical prospect at present of achieving our liberty by arms as—I won't say of bringing over Stonehenge.* But weigh the amount of probability yourself. Are we to vapour in this way? Besides the character it gets us, which materially lessens our utility in other things, it is a *suggestio falsi* to our own people, calculated to mislead and confuse them. But what I want especially to say to you is this—you don't write enough yourself. What's that you say? 'You have been busy at your book, and have

* In Mr. Marmion Savage's novel of "Young Ireland," the hero proposes to claim Stonehenge as a Celtic monument.

been out of town.' No excuse, Mr. Caudle; at least, though an excuse for not writing much in the *Nation*, it is none for omitting it altogether. There was a great deal to be said of a kind which no one could say as well as you."

Among the new agencies which the *Nation* called into play, one subtle force was still wanting, the fertile brain and passionate soul of woman. Sympathy they sent in abundance, and applause in super-abundance, but of help there came little. One singularly gifted woman, a near kinswoman of my own, had been among our foreign correspondents in 1843, and that was nearly all.* Now and then there were contributors posing as women, but like the female *dramatis personæ* in the classic drama, they were merely men in masks. After Davis's death an elegy by "Maria" attracted attention, and a contributor living in England was so touched by her gentle sympathetic spirit, that he addressed her in a tender madrigal:—

> "I only wish I was near, my girl,
> To whisper a thing in your ear, my girl,
> I'd speak it out now,
> But I fear somehow,
> A more than yourself might hear, my girl!"

But his Dulcinea was a mocking-bird; "Maria" was not only bearded but bloused, an artisan in fact, living among chips of mahogany and veneer; and the lover's enthusiasm was food for endless laughter in the Editor's Room, where the secret was known. Another contributor, who took the name of one of the fictitious women

* Mrs. Callan, wife of Dr. J. B. Callan.

of quality in the "Vicar of Wakefield," sent me a poem of exquisite tenderness and feeling, "The Old Story," and others in the same spirit, but after a time I discovered that the gown of Carolina Wilhelmina was of black stuff, and was only worn in company with a head-dress of horsehair. After the fresh start of the party at this time, the long-desired auxiliaries at length appeared. The first contribution came in a scrawl such as boys write in their teens, and girls only permit to be seen by the writing-master; crooked, blurred, and totally without punctuation. I would probably have looked no further, if experience had not taught me to distrust appearances in such cases. When it was deciphered, I found a natural and touching little poem, enclosed in a note so spontaneous and unstudied that to read it was like listening to the carol of a lark. The writer was a girl little over seventeen; a fragment or two of her letters will help the reader to understand her character*:—

"If you will send me one of Davis's letters, I will not value anything more than this memorial. I was very anxious to have something that had been with him. With all the sadness his

* Her name was Ellen Downing; she was the daughter of a medical doctor in Cork. Having been born in the octave of St. Patrick, she was baptised Ellen Mary Patrick. "E. M. P. D.," she wrote, "looks very official as a signature, but they are all saints' names, and I would think it perilous to drop a single initial." She afterwards changed her *nom de plume*, and is best remembered as "Mary" of the *Nation*. "My future signature shall be Mary; it is my dearest name. When first wishing to write to the *Nation*, and not knowing how to compose patriotic verses, I asked Mary to enable me, and then the song almost flowed to my lips, and when my letter was sealed (the first letter I ever sealed myself), and looked too rough to go safe, I asked her to take charge of it, and the next week proved she had heard that wish too."

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death left behind, there seems nothing so terribly sad as what you have told me. I never thought he had such a mourner; it seems so natural that he should have passed through life without meeting any one worthy of his love; but her life seems hardly worth preserving now—to be for ever thinking how happy she might have been, and striving to be content with the common-place happiness. . . . I love Gerald Griffin, but I love Davis more; his words go straight to my heart; he makes me understand my own nature, or else he creates in me a better nature than I had before; I notice in myself the influence of his writings; he has made me honester."

I sent her "Davis's Essays" and the "Ballad Poetry" of Ireland.

"I am reading the 'Essays' a second time," she wrote. "I think that one such Protestant might blot from the mind of Catholic Ireland the memory of the Penal Laws! The 'Essays' have made me eager in Irish studies generally; they have taught me (what after your letter I did not want to learn) to love him very much. Often in reading them I am suddenly arrested by I do not know what of sympathy or strength in a thought—perhaps it is at these same passages you hear his voice. . . . Thanks for the 'Ballad Poetry'; the introduction has explained everything I most wanted to know. I will give up Shelley, Byron, and even Elia for a while. It shall not be my fault if I am not Irish; but I shall suffer in giving up these dear English writers, as you will know, if you look at the verses on the next page, written on the 'Essays of Elia.' Is it not strange that do what I will, I cannot write an Irish poem. I rack my brain night and day, all to no purpose. But I will persevere; you would not invite me to persevere if there was no chance of succeeding. I am always afraid of dying before I am able to show that you did right in encouraging me. . . . I am studying the Ballads; Ferguson because you told me, but Davis, Callanan, and Drennan were my own favourites; above all Davis. Davis is sad reading now;

the very livingness of his poetry makes one afraid that death must have come with a terrible shock. 'Tis very hard to know what kind of verses to send; the poems which seemed to me too foolish for the trouble of reading are those you choose for the paper; but I suppose our own thoughts, however trifling, we write better (knowing them better) than greater subjects. . . I feel like one who has suddenly discovered ancestors, and I want to know all about my own people; how they lived and died long ago when they were a nation."

Her complaint that she could not write anything Irish was not unfounded; but it will encourage future students to know that she acquired this grace in the end. She came to write lyrics as soft as summer rain, and as passionate, spontaneous, and native as anything in the circle of song.

I sent her Percy's "Ballads," and a little encouragement to persevere.

"My favourite verse," she replied, "is where Robin Hood is described as being roused from sleep by the song of a bird, the little whisper of nature awakening the strong man. When I have read the book you will let me tell you how a girl feels it. But the country seems to me too holy a place for an outlaw's life. Being so seldom there, I am not at my ease; the very birds seem to me to have a better right to it than I, and if one of them be in my path, I turn aside for fear of disturbing a proprietor. I never had a sorrow yet could stand against a long walk in the country. . . . This new reading is invigorating; it gives a zest to life and living things, and repays me over and over for having given up my early favourites. One reason that I like the *Nation* so much is because, being always strong and assured, and never varying with circumstances, it is a kind of support to my spirits. They are not bad, though—only sometimes a little fit of gloom. . . . Why did you trouble yourself about legibility? If your letters

are not easily read, my pleasure in reading them lasts so much the longer. . . . You need not fear my growing too fond of Tennyson. I like poetry wild with war, or hot with love, or all glowing with scenery, but would rather write one little song that a child or peasant might sing and feel, than a very miracle-poem of abstraction and profundity."

I sent her Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," and invited her to make the experiment of romantic and tragic stories from Irish history. She tried, but the task did not suit her.

"I thought, if you should tell me to do an impossible thing, that this would make it possible; but the truth is, I don't know how to write these stories, and I don't like to fail. Some writing I know requires industry more than talent. This work would inspirit one to labour, but I fear the want of knowledge, invention, power and simplicity (so necessary for children), would hinder my success. The first and last might be acquired, but one cannot learn invention. And then I have a tendency to interest myself on the wrong side in history. In that story of the Earl of Desmond's marriage I felt quite differently from Moore. It seemed to me that the life prejudices (scarcely prejudices) of his faithful clan should have weighed more with him than a sudden fancy. I felt ashamed of his weakness, that a few hours should so alter him. I could not help thinking one or other of them to blame; either he deceived her into a false belief, or she, knowing how it would end, should have refused him. If she did not love him, what excuse for her? and if she did, she should not have injured him."

She long continued the delight of readers of taste and feeling, and it is told of a man who possessed both gifts in an eminent degree—"Father Prout"—that when a new number of the *Nation* reached London, his

first inquiry used to be whether it contained a poem from Mary of Cork.*

Another poetess came in a widely different guise. Her virile and sonorous songs broke on the public ear like the plash in later times of a great wave of thought in one of Swinburn's metres. She began, however, by prose, and turned the tables on the masculine mimics of woman by writing as a man. I was greatly struck by the first contribution, and requested Mr. John Fenshaw Ellis to call at the *Nation* office. Mr. Ellis pleaded that there were difficulties which rendered this course impracticable, and invited me to visit him in Leeson Street. I did so immediately, not without a secret suspicion of the transformation I was about to witness. A smiling parlour-maid, when I inquired for Mr. Ellis, showed me into a drawing-room, where I found only Mr. George Smith, publisher to the University. "What!" I cried; "my loyal friend, are you the new volcano of sedition?" Mr. Smith only answered by vanishing into a back drawing-room and returning with a tall girl on his arm, whose stately carriage and figure, flashing brown eyes, and features cast in an heroic mould, seemed fit for the genius of poetry, or the spirit of revolution. He presented me to Miss Jane Francesca Elgee, in lieu of Mr. John Fenshaw Ellis. Miss Elgee was the daughter of an archdeacon of the Establishment, and had probably

* Her handwriting was still a marvel of unsightliness, which she made painful efforts to amend, without much success. "My writing master said I was the only one that he could not teach to write. He was very cross with me. One day he found me copying a poem, and he made me skip from 'A star can make me jealous' to 'History is both improving and entertaining.' I laugh at it now, but it was very trying at the time."

heard nothing of Irish nationality among her ordinary associates, but, as the strong and generous are apt to do, had worked out convictions for herself. It will be necessary to recur to this new recruit many times in the course of this narrative;* for her little scented notes, sealed with wax of a delicate hue and dainty device, represented a substantial force in Irish politics, the vehement will of a woman of genius. A little later there came other poetesses, two of whom have associated their names permanently with the national literature of Ireland, Eva and Thomasine; the one pensive and sympathetic, the other in turn thoughtful, passionate, and playful.†

The Editor's room would not be a human institution

* Miss Elgee's verses appeared with the signature of "Speranza." She is now known to the world of letters and fashion as Lady Wilde, and is mother of Mr. Oscar Wilde, who has won a reputation of his own. A young Scotchman of a good deal of culture, but no imagination, gave me, two or three years before this time, a new poem as a literary curiosity, the most remarkable specimen anywhere to be found in print, as he conceived, of rhymed and rhetorical nonsense. I found it remarkable in quite another sense—a focus of passion, a mine of thought, a marvel as the work of a writer who had barely reached manhood—and I circulated it assiduously among the class fit to enjoy it. Miss Elgee relished it more keenly than Davis:—"'Festus' is superb—lofty as heaven and deep as inspiration. I read two scenes to-day that, as the French say, made me grow pale with wonder. I complained of his metrical faults, but in the 'Festival' scene the measure dances like Bacchantes."

† Eva was then Miss Mary Kelly, and is now Mrs. Kevin O'Dogherty; Thomasine was then Miss Olivia Knight, and is now Mrs. Hope Connolly. They both reside in Queensland, Australia.

Among the correspondence at this time were certain letters signed "Two Irish Girls," inviting their sex to come to the aid of the National party. "If Irishwomen are ever to come to any good, or will ever make up their minds to become, instead of drag-chains on all public spiritedness and disinterested patriotism, the fosterers and encouragers of it (as they should be)—surely, if ever there was one time more than another to call forth their best feelings, and make them forget all selfish interests, it is now" (*Nation*, May 23). The writers were exactly what they described themselves—"Irish girls," and sisters. They had not yet attained their majority, were distinguished by intelligence and beauty, and were quite

if it altogether escaped troubles. The second batch of Young Irelanders were loyal comrades, and sometimes affectionate friends, but, compared to the first batch, they were new levies, replacing veterans accustomed to the same trials and the same sports, and trained to stand fire together. When MacNevin's "Confiscation of Ulster" appeared, Mitchel reviewed it in a reasonable and discriminating spirit it seemed to me, but without the tenderness which that *enfant gaté* was accustomed to from his comrades. He pointed out that the book was marred by two faults, a loose arrangement of facts, and digressions which broke the thread of the story. MacNevin was not in a frame of mind to be patient, and he discharged a remonstrance at me forthwith :—

"I think Mitchel's stupid and bitter criticism will utterly spoil the sale of my 'Confiscation,' and I shall appeal to you through the Press if you refuse to correct his false and unfounded objections. From the way in which it has pleased Mr. John Mitchel to abuse my book, as he had abused McCarthy's, one would almost think that having written a book admirably himself, he will allow no one else to have written one well. James Duffy says that there is no use (and I think the old Virgin is right) in going on when our own paper, the paper of the Literary Party, makes it a point to assail our books. I know I would not for £100 have such a piece of beastly, stupid malignity appear against me."

The discontent attributed to the publisher was

volunteers, for they knew personally none of the party who had awakened their sympathy. They came to know them in the end as intimate friends. The youngest died at an early age; her sister became the wife of John Dillon, and the mother of another John Dillon, worthy of the blood he inherits.

genuine. The reviews in the *Nation* were restricted to Irish books, or books having some relation to Ireland; they were generally strict, and sometimes savage; and nonsense on our own side was repressed more mercilessly than elsewhere. The publisher, who was helpless in the hands of the writers of the "Library," as far as their individual works were concerned, loved to exercise his independence occasionally by publishing a book on his own judgment. These ventures often proved abortions, and some of them, to his despair, had been made mince-meat of at this time.*

Of the new recruits, the most embarrassing was Wallis. Though he was willing to act with the party, he objected to meet his colleagues; and the task of soothing a spirit almost as wayward as Rousseau's fell altogether on me. It was a task scarcely fit for a man overwhelmed with work, in uncertain health, and at best but poorly gifted with patience. A talk with him when

* Two other incidents, which will only excite smiles at present, were serious editorial troubles when they were new. Davis's friend Maddyn wrote a book of English history ("The Age of Pitt and Fox") taking a Conservative view of the reign of George III., and Mitchel reviewed it as if it were a public offence deserving a signal punishment. He covered it with ridicule and reprobation. As the treatment of English history by a writer addressing himself to Englishmen, lay quite out of the line of our ordinary supervision, the author naturally regarded the attack as wanton and ungenerous. The other incident was even more *maladroit*. One of our new poetesses, who has never written anything wanting vitality, who indeed could match the best amongst us at his own weapons, was warned in an Answer to Correspondents to carry her erotics elsewhere, as they were altogether unsuited to the *Nation*. Mitchel was an imperfect judge of poetry, and was quite wrong in the case in question; but only an editor can measure my consternation at seeing favourite contributors fiercely assailed or peremptorily ordered off the premises. The poetess bore the rebuff with singular good temper; but Maddyn, though he continued to correspond with me till his death, wrote no more for the *Nation*.

his spirits were not clouded by the petty cares which are apt to await a man who refuses to do the world's work in the world's way, was a great enjoyment. He had a wide range of knowledge, and possessed the invaluable faculty of talking in shorthand—expressing himself by allusions and symbols, instead of running into wearisome detail. He projected work with an audacity of imagination which rivalled Coleridge's; but a newspaper was too limited an area for his prodigious ground-plans; and I used to believe, in those days, that if the newspaper were a quarterly review, a quarto volume would have become his standard. The picture which has come down to us of Hazlitt, isolated and angry, conscious of great powers, and believing himself unfairly and intentionally repressed, would almost answer for Wallis; except that he did not in the smallest degree share Hazlitt's morbid horror of contempt and disparagement from the crowd. His complaint was not that the world undervalued him, the ignorant world would blunder of course, but he was sorely touched by the penalty it was paying for the offence. Other men had leisure and fortune, extensive libraries, and quiet rural retreats, and the world would have found it a profitable transaction to confer ease and distinction upon him in return for the counsel and guidance he could give it. This monologue, which I listened to in many keys, had not the least resemblance to vulgar vanity; it was even tragic in some aspects rather than ludicrous, for in fact he did possess gifts which, united with the noble simplicity and self-forgetfulness of Davis, might have

made him a public benefactor. I reminded him under what disadvantages the greatest work has been commonly undertaken, cited the case of the most eminent co-temporary teacher, living contentedly in a small house, in a narrow street, close to the foggy Thames, the world having sent no deputation to draw him from his hiding-place, and crown him with wealth and honour. I suggested that Davis's place was open to whomsoever nature fitted to occupy it, to him as Davis's friend rather than another, and much more to the same effect—for I had scarcely yet come to understand that you might as well exhort a man to be seven feet high as advise him to become something for which nature has denied him the necessary spiritual equipment.

What, perhaps, I found hardest to bear was a calm assumption of superiority to Davis, as in some sense his special creation. He had, possibly, a wider acquaintance with great books than Davis, and certainly a more delicate and discriminating critical taste; but, unlike his friend, his faculties were not his servants; the sinews of his will were so relaxed that he could never count on employing them for a given work on any given occasion. Davis's notes were as brief as telegrams, but his work was prodigious. Wallis wrote letters as elaborate and almost as graphic as Horace Walpole's, but his intellect went entirely into these delicate blossoms, bearing only a scanty and blighted crop of fruit. With a curious perversity, he would sometimes send a letter of twenty pages to excuse himself for not furnishing an article of a hundred lines, and the letter

would be better than an average article. Here is a specimen:—

"You don't seem to remember that what you like in my late scribblings regards what we had a good deal of talk about when we first became acquainted. And then, you must consider all the experience I have had myself for the ten years or so that I was 'Professor of Things in general and Patriotism in particular,' in a garret in T.C.D. If I, and surely it was I that did it (his exorbitantly extravagant praise of me showed it), if I loosed the tenacious phlegm that clogged Davis's nature, and hid his powers from himself and the world—if I kept T. M. for several years from deflecting into the Whig parabola, which was his natural tendency—and if I changed John Dillon from a Whig and Utilitarian to a Nationalist and a popular leader—I must have expended rather a serious amount of magnetic force in the task, to say nothing of the scores of others that I mesmerised with less success, or less remarkable results. Don't think I am boasting, for I am rather ashamed than otherwise, both of the plentiful nonsense I used to talk, and of the foibles of human nature that make dreams and illusions more potent over it than the daylight of mature reason.

"I was very much pleased with your leader in last *N.* I have seldom read an article of which I would have been better pleased to be the author. When I read Davis's dashing articles in old times, I used often to cry out 'that's my thunder,' as he frequently reproduced, not only the ideas, but the illustrations, and sometimes the identical words that I had used in the Historical Society. These, however, I had priority of publication, *ore rotundo,* to plead in my favour. But you are not saying what I have said, but anticipating what I wished to say, which, as saving me time and thought, gives me greater pleasure still. I also like exceedingly your replies to your badgerers, and, in short, I don't think you ever wrote so well as you are doing now. . . . I met lately a beautiful idea in an old tour through Ireland by some Saxon or quasi Saxon, published about

the time of Arthur Young's tour. Talking of Lough Erne and its 400 islands, he says it might be made 'a rural Venice.' Beautiful, is it not?"

In the end, he wrote some reviews for the *Nation*, several columns long, and to be continued into future numbers on the same scale; but they were got at a sacrifice of time and tranquillity, which was a high price to pay. My London correspondents wearied themselves in efforts to improve matters, but with only limited success. They urged that it was hopeless to expect in natures like his the vigorous self-reliance and healthy patience which enabled Richter and Carlyle to go through poverty and neglect uncomplainingly, and to attack any work however uncongenial, so it was not against honour or conscience.

"To such men," one of them wrote, "a task distasteful is a task impossible. Gifted—or cursed—with an intense personal feeling, conscious of their own abilities, and seeing men a million times their inferiors smiled on by fortune and the world, they cannot get it out of their heads that they individually are treated with injustice. Hence, morbid suspicions, restlessness, and conduct inexplicable and distressing. But if to want of position and appreciation are added all the tortures of actual distress—

'Tortures the poor alone can know,
The proud alone can feel,'

ought we to feel wonder or anger at anything they say or do?"

At length he undertook a work which he performed with remarkable success, to edit a collection of Davis's poems. But my trouble was not over. He tortured the printers with niceties of arrangement which im-

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proved the book, I make no doubt, but involved serious expenditure; the printers rushed to the publisher with complaints, and the publisher to me. The introduction is a charming piece of criticism. The first draft of it did not satisfy me, and as Davis's reputation was at stake, I told him so frankly. In a paroxysm of that sensitive strength which a man of genius never so surely puts forth as to vindicate his powers against depreciation, he recast it in a single night, and made it what it is. A couple of days later he wrote to me:—

"On Sunday I made a fresh struggle, sat down to my desk about half-past twelve o'clock in the day, and, except for meals, and an hour's visit from Hudson, never left it until half-past seven next morning, having sat up all night, and the closing pages of my work having been gleamed on by the rising sun, and chorused by the sweet tentatory notes of the awakening birds, for which accompaniment, perhaps, my work is not the worse. At least, I am at present in good humour with it—whether I shall continue so is another question. *Nous verrons.* I omitted a good deal that I had written when you saw me, and recast what you read, so that I had the whole work to do when I sat down on Sunday at noon—and did a good deal in the nineteen hours' work. I went to bed at eight o'clock a.m., as soon I had done, and did not suffer from the fatigue. But I had left myself only eight or ten pages room, and my introduction making twenty pages of brevier —it would have made thirty, if printed like yours to the Ballad Poetry—there is a third of a sheet over the seven sheets. James Duffy, I know, will be irate, but I think he is very well off to get so long an introduction, after all the other work I had with the volume. And, at all events, he has been so disobliging—and, indeed, almost rude and insolent—in regard to matters when I expressed a wish, that I don't care for his vexation. He seems not to have taken into account that really he was not my

'employer' in the present instance, but that I was acting as Davis's literary executor, and had the duties of that office to perform as well and as conscientiously as I could. I daresay he will also be annoyed at my announcing a new edition in the prefatory advertisement. But he may choke himself, if he likes, and if the hangman had the choking of him he would not have more than his deserts. He gets a present of the copyright (a permanent property) of the poems of the first Irishman of our day, and he plays the vulgar niggard, and sends out the poems in a cover which would have choked Davis himself with vexation, had he lived to see it. I wish he were a Russian for half an hour, and I the Emperor Nicholas, I'd give him the knout, and then send him to Siberia."

When the book appeared, he bethought himself of the next stage, when it would be brought up for public judgment:—

"I think," he wrote to me, "I may have the same privilege in regard to what I edit, as that dexterous, sinister Southey got for what he wrote—viz., of chosing my own reviewers. I would be very glad you would yourself review Davis's poems in the *Nation*, as there is much to be said of them, which I had not time or opportunity to say. And if you had not time, I wish you would ask John O'Hagan to do it. Either he or you would do it better, earnestness included, than anyone else you could get."

He had his wish, the better critic of the two wrote of the poet with loving tenderness, and of the editor with genial and discriminating praise.*

* Wallis had been editor of the *Citizen*, and was smitten with a common craze of editors—an ex-brother of the craft may say so without offence—that nature specially commissioned them to revise and perfect the work of their contributors. His letters to Davis at that era can scarcely be read with patience to-day by any who knew both, and can estimate the result of their lives. One or two of them will be found in a note on Wallis and Davis at the end of Chapter IV., Book II.

A constant trouble in those days was the necessity of keeping watch against giving any ground for misrepresentation to Mr. John O'Connell's mercenaries. We worked like soldiers in the trenches under constant fire, the fire of slander and misrepresentation. Barry edited a volume of Irish songs, and included in it a rollicking piece of folly, which may be found in every Irish collection up to that date—

> "There was an Irish lad,
> And he loved a cloistered nun."

The mercenaries uttered a shout of triumph. Could anything be plainer than that Young Ireland wanted the cloisters to be violated, and designed to teach the rising generation to have no respect for nuns? To be sure the song had been published for half a century, without involving these serious consequences; but the motive was everything, and this nephew and pupil of a bishop had manifestly the worst motives. McCarthy at the same time was writing a series of papers on modern English poets, and necessarily included Shelley; for a muster of English poets without Shelley would be a marvellous phenomenon. There is not a line in McCarthy's paper which a scholar and critic, say Cardinal Newman or Cardinal Manning, might not have written. And Shelley was a passionate sympathiser with Irish nationality; but he was author of "Queen Mab," and to admit that the author of "Queen Mab" was a poet, was to betray the cause of truth. O'Connell himself took part in this outcry. McCarthy, for whom

he had a particular kindness, for the young poet had written of him with enthusiasm, had need to call at his house in Merrion Square at this time. The author of the papers was quite unknown to the public, and O'Connell immediately commenced to deplore the vicious courses into which the writers connected with the *Nation* had fallen. It was a plain proof of their sympathy with infidelity to quote a poet who was an ostentatious infidel. McCarthy might have replied that O'Connell himself constantly quoted in his speeches the author of "Don Juan," and the chief interlocutor in "Julian and Madelo," who was a more contemptuous scoffer at sacred things than Shelley; but that it would scarcely have been just to hold him responsible for the general character of the poet, or for the poems which he did not quote or approve. One of the young men, who has since greatly distinguished himself in Catholic literature and Catholic affairs, wrote to me in natural indignation :—

"The outcry about Barry's songs is abominable, but I hear that one has been got up against McCarthy's Shelley articles more monstrous still. Grossly morbid and unhealthy, and anything but indicative of sound religion, if it be general; but I suspect that it is confined to a few priests, and the villainy of Pontius ("Pilot" to wit—very bad, in troth, but no matter)."*

* Another controversy arose out of Barry's songs respecting the Exile of Erin. The authorship was claimed for George Nugent Reynolds, from whom it was alleged that Thomas Campbell stole it. The case rested a good deal on its similarity in spirit to "Mary le More," a ballad of 1798, attributed to Reynolds. Mr. Hercules Ellis, a barrister with literary tastes, was the champion of Reynolds. The *Nation* scouted the claim, and after a time it was discovered that Reynolds was not even the author of "Mary le More," which was found in the works of Mr. Rushton, a Liverpool bookseller, published in 1806. Barry, who had at first been disposed to countenance the claim made on behalf of Reynolds, and got chaffed for his

Clarence Mangan was a constant correspondent; but he was a man of letters, and preferred topics which had little enough to do with the main business in which we were engaged. He was often humorous, but his humour was grim and forced; that of a man far from being gay at heart. It recalls the verbal quibbles with which Swift and his friend Sheridan amused their leisure; dreary pleasantries, I think, from the complete absence of genuine drollery, or natural animal spirits. But it is quaint and characteristic, and a specimen or two will perhaps be welcome:—

"'Clarence is come—false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,
Who stabbed *me* in my grave near (Timoleagne).'

"I trust, my dear Duffy, that poor Shane O'Colain will not thus greet me on my entrance into Hades. I have just finished his 'Lament,' and hope I have done it, at least, justice. The measure I have chosen is one peculiarly elegiacal—namely, eight syllables, twelve syllables, ten syllables, and six syllables to each verse. But, enough. Again, to quote my namesake:—

'My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.'

I will shortly give you a funeral wail from the Turkish on the decease of one of the Sultans; the spirit of the composition closely resembles what we meet with in Irish poems. The small ballad from one of Müller's Greek melodies I have thrown into several stanzas. It is, however, all one in the Greek. . . My eye has just lighted on Spenser's line:—

'The wretched man 'gan grinning horridlie.'

simplicity, dismissed the matter finally with a pleasant stroke of humour. If Mr. Ellis set his heart on proving that the "Exile of Erin" was written by a native, he suggested that it would be an easier task to prove that Campbell was an Irishman than that the author of the ragged song of "Mary le More" wrote the "Exile of Erin."

I rather fancy that this is a misprint for—

'The wretched Mangan grinning? Horrid lie!'

For, in truth, I feel as if I should never laugh again."

And again:—

"You wish to know why I have not acknowledged the receipt of the letter of credit you sent me. I beg in reply to observe that any acknowledgment of the kind forms no part of my system. Any *given* amount of money, in gold, silver, or paper, I take, put up, and say nothing about. If it be gold, I introduce it into a steel purse; if silver, I drop it into a silk one; if paper, I stow it away in a pocket-book; but I never jingle or display any of these before the eyes of others. . . . Don't you think that *Punch* mistakes when he supposes that the line in Julius Cæsar—

'See what a rent the envious Casca made!'

proves Casca to have been a landlord? Who was Casca? My notion is this:—That Mark Anthony gave a cask of brandy-and-water, marked N.V.S. (not very strong), to his maid-servant to keep for him; that she bibbed it all off, and filled the cask with sea-water instead; that the muriatic phlogiston (as Priestley would have said) burst the cask, and that M. Anthony, on discovering this, simply delivered himself of the reproach—

'Sea-water rent the N.V.S. cask—ah! maid.'"

The renaissance in literature and ethics naturally extended to art. It was about this time that J. J. McCarthy conceived the design which he afterwards executed with so much success, of restoring a native character in our ecclesiastical architecture; and another young architect of Irish descent, practising his profession in England, was possessed at the same time with the same purpose. He announced his intention of

resigning his position to prepare himself for the task, that he might share in the labours for Ireland.

"What I have seen" (he wrote to me) "has led me to conjecture that a style exists in Ireland distinct from what is styled (improperly) Gothic in England. In France, with which country England certainly had more frequent communication than she had with Ireland in the period shortly antecedent to the Norman Conquest, there is a distinct style; nay, even the ecclesiastical remains in Normandy, built during the lifetime of the Conqueror, differ most essentially from those in England of the same date. Germany too, as well as every European country in which the pointed-arch was prevalent, presents essential and wholly distinct differences in its development. This must be the case wherever art is the healthy growth of the present mind, wherever it is the result of necessity and serves an end—wherever in fact it is useful and vital—it must be as much an expression of the character of the people with whom it originates as their music or their poetry. But facts are stronger than fancy; and I should bring my theory face to face with the remains of our native architecture, and make myself certain of its truth. . . . To this end I purpose, as soon as I shall have acquired the requisite means, to spend two years as a student in Ireland; to study our language and history, to visit and examine our ruins, to make exact drawings of their details, and perhaps to publish a work on the subject. But what I most desire is to raise up again the churches of the Old Time—to nationalise in fact our architecture. At present, the Irish architects are wholly dependent for their knowledge of middle-age buildings on the works of Englishmen, chiefly to Britton and the elder Pugin. . . . If ever I am of service to my country or my kind, the source of my impulsion in the right path is to be traced to you. Before I became acquainted with the *Nation*, I wished, but never strove; and the energies of my mind and character were being slowly eaten away by monotonous toil, by hopelessness, by want of sympathy. You

taught me to garner my thoughts—to learn my character—to love my country. You and another, whose name, from the first moment I read a line of his poetry, I loved and honoured—Davis. It does indeed give me a melancholy pleasure to know that once before he left this world, he heard my name from no unkindly voice; perhaps even (for he was so kind!) his heart melted under the impression of my reverence—humble as it was." *

He visited Ireland and made the personal acquaintance of the leading Young Irelanders. On his return home he wrote :—

"When shall I spend another such day as last Sunday? Among those whose high names had been long familiar to my ear; whose high thoughts had been my aliment and support during dark lonely years; among them—may I say, of them?—their humblest associate. I cherish the remembrance of that day; I recall the faces, the kind looks of the friends who were round me then, and I keep them in the store of my memory against wintry days to come, assured while the images remain perfect, I can never be entirely wretched. Forgive this long egoism; I could write for hours on the same theme, for it is not often that I and pleasure have been play-fellows."

These were the pursuits and recreations of men who were soon to be denounced as public enemies, and whose ruin became the chief aim of the Repeal Association.

* *Nation* Correspondence. M. MacD. to Duffy.

CHAPTER IV.

O'CONNELL'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST YOUNG IRELAND.

TRUTH says a modern historian alone explains everything. In the painful and tragic story which it will now be my duty to record, the story of a great man's fall from popular confidence and the ruin of a great cause, the reader would find himself groping in hopeless darkness for a clue, if he were not told at the outset the true origin of these disasters. O'Connell had once more made up his mind to abandon the Repeal question for a parliamentary alliance with the Whigs; and as the *Nation* would be a formidable impediment to this proceeding, he resolved to make a vigorous attempt to bring it to submission, and if the attempt failed, to use his prodigious authority to destroy the journal and the political school associated with it. Truth explains everything. It will explain the otherwise perplexing phenomenon of a leader striking blow after blow, some of them manifestly foul blows, against men serving in his own ranks, and with whom he lived in constant and familiar intercourse.

The story is intensely painful, but it is one not to be evaded or hidden away. It contains a lesson of profound importance to a country where history is constantly repeating itself. It cannot be dispensed with

in a vindication of the men whose career I have undertaken to describe. If there does not exist for them the justification that throughout all the contest with O'Connell they were acting on the defensive, protecting the cause to which they were devoted, and their personal honour and opinions, from a determined attempt to destroy them, they were fatally and unpardonably in the wrong. It is still more necessary for the defence of the Irish people, for without this explanation they must remain liable to the imputation of levity and ingratitude. But the Irish cause was not the private property of the leader and his family, to be taken up and laid down at his individual discretion; it was the problem bequeathed to our race to solve under penalty of perpetual misery and subjection; the sacred purpose kept alive by the blood of our soldiers shed in battle, and the sweat and tears of patriots who served it with patient hearts in slavery or in exile.

The motives which influenced O'Connell towards a new Whig alliance must always remain a subject of conjecture; but whatever were the motives, we can now discern that the method of carrying out his purpose was unwise and disastrous. He did not, as in 1835, stop short, and turn deliberately and with due notice into another path; but he stopped short, abandoned one after another the agencies by which a national cause is promoted, and all the while clamorously insisted that he was on his march to the original goal. Whatever were his motives, this method was plainly a fatal mistake. It may be that he despaired of carrying Repeal

in his own lifetime; that seeing the Government were not frightened into a surrender by the monster meetings, he believed he had played his game and lost for the time being—or it may be that he had come to regard success as not only then, but for ever, hopeless, from the relative forces engaged in the struggle; in either case, how worthy of a great man entrusted to think for his nation it would have been to have said so in the plainest terms. There would have been a tempest of rage and disappointment no doubt, but he would have faced it resting on his actual convictions, which is like standing on a solid rock. Those who could not accept his decision might have at least respected it, for frankness and sincerity are always respectable. Or take the other alternative: suppose he considered the existence of a Liberal Government afforded such an opportunity of obtaining advantageous measures, and useful appointments, as justified him in postponing the national demand to another season or another generation—had he said so, it cannot be doubted that he would have carried a large party with him; for the timid and selfish constitute a preponderating element in every community. In either case he would have escaped the degrading task of inventing impossible pretences for the course he had resolved to take, and dragging after him a train of prelates and priests, who painfully strove to believe and profess what was altogether incredible. He would still have held his head high, as a man may always do who is acting upon his convictions, whatever they may be. But by speaking

the language of nationality when he had relinquished the purpose, and by placing himself under the odious necessity of denouncing those who did not go with him in the new route as enemies of the Irish cause, he came gradually to alienate all that was sincere and high-spirited in the country, and he paid as painful a penalty in the end as want of candour has ever incurred in the world's history.

Many influences combined to precipitate him into the less frank and honourable course. He was surrounded by persons who hated or feared the Young Irelanders, and longed for a rupture with them. Among the Whigs with whom he had been associated in public life, there were men of honour and ability, who had a genuine and perfectly honest dread of them as dangerous fanatics; and a more numerous section who detested them as the chief impediment to a return of the pleasant times when patronage and promotion were distributed from Merrion Square. The staff of hired agitators who lived by nominal offices, or salaried missions, were persons whose opinion or advice would have no direct influence on O'Connell's conduct, but they had the opportunities which always belong to a *valetaille:* they had constant access to his ear, they could carry stories, distort facts, and irritate him by sly suggestions of rivalry, and they probably produced more positive results than graver counsellors. It was one of the fatal weaknesses of his life to surround himself by men whose chief characteristic was abject submission; men capable of wilfully misleading him for their private

ends, more than one of whom would have scuttled the ship to carry off an armful of plunder.

But it is not enough to account for the conduct of the base and envious. There were many upright men determined to adhere to O'Connell through every change. Some from policy, preferring the more cautious and experienced guide; some from gratitude, resolved to support the Emancipator right or wrong—a sentiment which has been too widely diffused among mankind to allow one to call it unnatural. In every country there have been Royalists who preferred the interests of the King to the interests of the State, forgetting that the *raison d'être* of the King is to serve the State; and it is not strange that there were Irishmen who preferred the interest of O'Connell to the public good, forgetting that when a popular leader is not serving the people, there is no longer any justification for his official existence. The Catholic clergy were partly moved by this spontaneous loyalty, partly by a suspicion of the Young Irelanders which had been carefully and systematically sown in their minds. That it was, in the main, a sincere feeling no one has better reason to know than I; for turning over the records of the period I find men falling into the common current, who afterwards, on better knowledge, were among my fastest friends. But a more powerful factor than any of these, and one which lay at the root of all others, was the insensate ambition of Mr. John O'Connell to succeed his father. The time was at hand when the aged tribune must have a successor, and if the successor were chosen, like the

Tanist of an Irish king, from among the chiefs fittest to lead and rule, it was too plain that the sceptre would pass from the house of Darrynane. Human motives are commonly mixed, but the reader who pursues this story to the end will, I think, be of opinion that O'Connell fell, as the first and third Napoleon fell, in a vain attempt to found a dynasty without a competent dynast. Nor will they fail to recognise that his fall was essentially his own work. There was not, indeed, in Ireland at that time any man, in any station, who could have seriously disturbed the sway O'Connell exercised over the affection and judgment of his race, except only O'Connell himself.

In the eyes of the trusting multitude he held a commission as clearly from on high as that of Moses or the Maccabees, to lead his people through the desert to the Promised Land; to men of more culture and reflection he was at least a statesman of proved capacity and wide experience, who if he left, or lost, his position as the organ of the nation's will, could probably never be replaced. The one would have thought it sacrilege, the other madness, to displace him. And no one knew that it was no longer the O'Connell of old they had to deal with; that his brain was undergoing a rapid decay; that a disease had set in which clouds the judgment and slackens the will, and it may be presumed invades the neighbouring domain of morals. The "uncertain gait" had not yet exhibited itself, but the failing intellect and the enfeebled will left him a prey to counsels which he would have despised in the day of his strength; and he

proceeded with his own hand to deface and dilapidate the image of a patriot chief so long cherished by his race.

Some of the blows struck against the *Nation* in rapid succession must now be described. The first dates from a time anterior to the temporary retirement of Sir Robert Peel; the others all followed that transaction. Towards the close of 1845, when famine was predicted, and agrarian outrages began to be heard of, the *Morning Herald*, understood to be an organ of the Peel Government, foreshadowed a decisive method of dealing with the difficulty. "Sedition Hall must be shut up, and the agitation for Repeal declared high treason." The *Standard*, another reputed organ, echoed the threat, and assailed conspicuous Repealers by name, from O'Connell to the editor of the *Nation*. "The government of Sir Robert Peel had already dealt sternly with cheats and bullies by sending them to gaol," and the result of this vigorous action might be noted in "the subdued tone, the stricken ambition, and the wavering finances of the convicted conspirators." The official organ bade good men rejoice that the system of railways then commenced would enable the Government to carry out these designs by placing every part of Ireland "within six hours of the garrison of Dublin." The precise thing threatened was that it should be made a capital offence to demand the repeal of an Act of Parliament, and that resistance to this tyranny was happily rendered impossible by the new facilities for carrying troops to suppress opinion wherever it became dangerous. Mitchel wrote on the

subject in the next *Nation*, in a spirit which seemed to me then, and still seems to me, natural and legitimate under the circumstances. He told the official organ that railways were good for the nation to whom they belonged, but not good against that nation; that one day, one night, one single hour, would render them useless for hostile purposes, and deliver any enemy using them into the hands of the natives.

"For actual measures of coercion," he said, "all Ireland laughs at them. The military uses or abuses of railways are tolerably well understood; but it might be useful to promulgate through the country, to be read by all Repeal wardens in their parishes, a few short and easy rules as to the mode of dealing with railways in case of any enemy daring to make a hostile use of them."

He went on to describe, in somewhat needless detail, the methods by which railways could be rendered unserviceable for the movement of troops. To lift a mile of rail, or fill a perch or two of cutting, or break down a piece of embankment, was easy enough; and soldiers on their march might be dealt with as Hofer dealt with the Bavarian invaders of the Tyrol.

"But 'tis a dream. No enemy will put us to realise these scenes. Yet let all understand what a railway *may* and what it may *not* do."

A few days after, O'Connell made an unexpected visit to the *Nation* office, to remonstrate against the dangerous conjunction of Repeal wardens with lessons in the art of guerilla warfare. He would be obliged, for the "safety of the Association," to speak of the matter in Concilia-

tion Hall, unless, in the next number, we utterly separated such teaching from the officers of the popular organisation. It was somewhat surprising that the orator who had taught that men could walk after Repeal wardens in rank and file as well as if they were called sergeants or captains, and who promised that any attempt to suppress opinion by force—the identical thing here threatened—would be made over his dead body, should have become so squeamish; but he was the leader, and we complied. Mitchel in the next number mentioned that Mr. O'Connell had remonstrated on the subject, and that it must be clearly understood that the *Nation* "had neither connection with nor control over Repeal wardens."* On this hint the London press broke into a loud chorus of reprobation. The warning that railways could not be successfully used against the people to whom they belonged was tortured into the foolish and wicked offence of teaching an ignorant mob to tear up and to destroy the property of the community.†

As I guarded at all times the character of the *Nation* as jealously as my personal character, I wrote a letter in the shape of a leading article, placing the question in what I considered its true light, and vindicating all that had been written by my colleague. The result was satisfactory, and the slander seemed to have run itself out of breath. But that it should die out was scarcely

* *Nation*, November 29, 1845.

† It is a fact not without significance, in ascertaining the actual intentions of the journal, that I had invested nearly all my savings in the railways in question.

the result desired. After a couple of weeks' silence, notwithstanding that all he asked had been done, O'Connell mentioned the subject in Conciliation Hall. He described his visit to the *Nation* office, to guard the "safety of the Association," and expressed his strong interest in the prosperity of Irish railways—which was scarcely the question at issue. He did not speak, he declared, in any bad feeling towards the *Nation*. He admired its talents, "but had admired them more in the time of the illustrious dead"—there being, it might be inferred, a manifest falling-off of late. Next day there was a conviction in a wide circle that O'Connell had pointed out the *Nation* to the Attorney-General for prosecution. At the subsequent meeting Mr. John O'Connell took further measures for the imperilled safety of the Association. Captain Broderick was appointed Inspector-General of Repeal reading-rooms, and instructed to make a personal visitation, and to warn them, in case of famine, against being misled by evil counsel from the safe method of legal and constitutional agitation. Immediately after these ominous precautions, I received notice from the Crown Solicitor of a prosecution for seditious libel. The Irish press of all sections denounced the prosecution as without adequate cause or justification. The *Evening Mail* declared that there was no political excitement to excuse such an attack upon the liberty of speech and opinion. The popular journals demanded if it was to entrap the national press that ministerial organs were instructed to begin a controversy on the military uses of railways, from which

the *Nation* could not shrink without forfeiting its character and position. Mr. Lucas, in the *Tablet*, declared that he adopted every word of my letter of justification, and affirmed that the Government were induced to prosecute because there was supposed to be a coolness between O'Connell and the party whom the *Nation* represented. He asked for explanation of the strange fact, that O'Connell in Conciliation Hall preserved a total silence respecting this attack on a Repeal journal.*

But O'Connell was not content with preserving silence himself. One of the notes of genius in his career is the pains and forethought he bestowed upon collateral means of promoting his immediate object. To the last hour of his career the powerful tribune, when he had a new design in hand, took as much precaution to influence essential men, and to tap reservoirs of opinion, as if he were a new comer on the threshold of public life; while men without his experience or influence sometimes appeared to expect that their ends would be accomplished by a spontaneous operation of nature. On this occasion he had to attend Parliament, but before leaving Dublin he instructed Mr. Ray and the Head Pacificator to stop any expression of sym-

* My watchful friends in London kept me informed of the impression created by the prosecution in circles far away from party influence. One of them wrote:—"Now, *ad publica negotia*, your letter was beyond praise. There is not a sentence in it that did not win P——'s and my own heartiest approval. If anything can set you right with the country, that will. . . . They [Thomas and Mrs. Carlyle] had strong sympathy with you about this prosecution affair, and liked your letter extremely. Lucas feels about it in the way you see by the *Tablet*. But, moreover, he is very indignant at O'Connell's conduct, which 'caps the climax,' as he would say himself."

pathy with the prosecuted journal in Conciliation Hall. O'Brien it might be feared would not be controlled by these officials, and he wrote a private note to Mr. James O'Hea, asking him to see O'Brien and intreat him not to moot the question. If the advice failed he intimated that he would come back from London himself rather than permit the Association to be identified with the *Nation*.* The remonstrance was not effectual; at the next meeting O'Brien referred to the prosecution. He did not think it necessary to inquire whether the article was a discreet or politic one, but he was prepared on his individual responsibility to declare that it was morally and legally justifiable. It was a reply to offensive diatribes in English journals, announcing that railways would be exceedingly useful in effecting the subjugation of the Irish people. Maurice O'Connell, who had been placed in the chair as another measure of precaution, interrupted O'Brien to suggest that it was not quite in order to discuss a subject which did not immediately affect the Association, and that he was perhaps treading on dangerous ground. O'Brien said he would bow to the chair, but, as an appeal had been made to his discretion, he continued of opinion that it was not only discrete but most advisable that the topic should be treated in that place. The Chairman rejoined that he individually agreed with Mr. O'Brien in the premises, but his business was to prevent the discussion of anything which did not relate to the Association. Mr. O'Brien sat down; but many persons continued

* I have seen this note from O'Connell to O'Hea.

to think that the prosecution of a Repeal journal for defending the honour of the country against a threat to shut up Conciliation Hall, and declare the agitation for Repeal to be high treason, was as nearly related to the Association as the character of Monsieur Thiers, or the treatment of tenants in Darrynane Beg *—O'Connell's estate—which had all been elaborately discussed without let or hindrance. At the ensuing meeting Mr. Henry Grattan took up the subject. He warned the Orangemen of Ulster that if they attempted to meet and express their constitutional opinion against the new-fangled commercial policy of Peel, the Government might send troops from Dublin to Armagh, and if any independent journal suggested that if they were sent by railway for such a purpose, the result might be hazardous, he would be prosecuted for exercising that constitutional right. The Head Pacificator jumped to his feet to save the Association from "manifest danger." He told Mr. Grattan, in the prodigious rhetoric for which he was distinguished, that "from the lips of O'Connell himself," whose profound legal wisdom had been Ireland's palladium of safety for so many years, as his parting words aboard the packet, that he considered the introduction of this subject while the case was pending in the Court of Queen's Bench, as deeply and dangerously calculated to imperil the "safety of the Repeal Association of Ireland."

* The *Times* sent a commissioner to Ireland to report on the condition of tenants on O'Connell's property; contradictions and refutations of his report, which was highly unfavourable, occupied the Association on at least a dozen occasions.

Mr. Grattan yielded to this impassioned appeal; but O'Brien, who began to be impatient of the manifest injustice, declared that he had consulted legal friends since the last meeting, and they were of opinion the subject might be discussed with safety and propriety; he would postpone it, however, till the return of Mr. O'Connell. The business was never mentioned any more. O'Brien, it seemed to me, did just enough to save his self-respect—not enough to prevent or even to mitigate a flagrant injustice. To avoid an open rupture he had already borne many things which must have tortured his sensitive nature, and we made liberal allowances for the difficulties of his position. But it was with a sort of good-natured despair we saw him permit a precedent to be established under which he, or any man or party, might be cut off from public sympathy. What the Association and its leader might properly have done, what O'Connell would assuredly have done at an earlier day, and under other circumstances, will be seen when the case came to trial, and was removed from the atmosphere of political cabals and treated on its intrinsic merits.

As the "safety of the Association" was a pretence frequently employed at this era, and influenced persons not accustomed to test a proposition by the evidence or probability on which it rests, it is worth a moment's consideration. Was the Government eagerly watching for some occasion to prosecute the body?—for it is on this presumption the theory was founded. Sir Robert Peel, it may be safely assumed, desired nothing less

than such an undertaking. He had already failed with a strong case; would he be likely to succeed with a weaker one? He was sending messages of peace to Ireland in the shape of remedial measures; to throw away their good effect by a conflict with the popular organisation would argue him imbecile. But beyond all this there was a more manifest motive for doing nothing; the movement was gradually ceasing to be formidable; what object would he serve by prosecuting it? The preliminary stages of the trial were protracted by an attempt of my counsel to quash the indictment, a proceeding which threw it back for several months. Meantime the class from whom juries are selected could meditate at leisure on the significant fact that the case was prejudged by the popular tribunes in Conciliation Hall, as decisively as by the Crown counsel and court officials on Cork Hill.*

The convenient class of intermediaries, who are fond of masquerading as common friends, took occasion of the lull to assure me that all ill-feeling would disappear if only the *Nation* and the Young Irelanders would

* A few months before this period letters had been received from bishops and other eminent persons, and from Repeal reading-rooms, acknowledging the receipt of the Repeal Prize Essays, distributed by the Association; a keen-sighted correspondent requested to be informed how the perturbation respecting the railway article on Burgh Quay was to be reconciled with the instruction so recently circulated in these Essays? "The Repeal Association has presented to our reading-room a very valuable essay, expressly on the Repeal of the Union, in which the author points out the facilities which the close ditches and hedges of this country afford for resisting regular troops, shows how the use of cannon may be stopped by breaking up the roads, and after ridiculing the bayonet used by the British troops, strongly recommends that charges of cavalry should be received at the point of the pike, a weapon for which the writer of the first prize 'Repeal Essay' has a decided preference, and the materials for manufacturing which, he says, lie ready to every one's hands in great abundance."

show themselves ready to follow the lead of the Liberator. I replied that nobody could possibly be readier to follow him than we were, if he led us on the road to Repeal, but that if he meant to march to a new Whig alliance, that that was a road we could not travel together. It was my belief at the time that O'Connell prompted these overtures, for though he was merciless, he was not petty or malignant in his enmities. But they all tacitly implied submission on the cardinal point at issue as the condition of peace.

Whoever can recall, or can imagine, O'Connell's position in Ireland at that time, will understand that the contest with which we were threatened was not a pastime. His dictatorship had never been successfully called in question. For thirty years he had banished from public life whatever candidate for popular support he thought fit, and ruined whatever newspaper gave him serious cause of offence. His power was one nearly without parallel in history, or only to be matched by the devotion of soldiers to a leader like Cæsar or Napoleon. Attacks which would have laid prostrate men of undoubted popularity and influence made no impression on his authority. The slander, even the well-founded censure, of opponents did not disturb it a tittle. It outlived all dangers and seemed to defy them. I repeat, for it is a fact which conveys a signal lesson both to popular leaders and to the people, that there was no one among the sons of men who could have overthrown it except only himself.

For my part I felt by no means confident of success.

O'Connell, in the inflated rhetoric of Tom Steele, was the "lay pontiff of Catholicity." In sober prose, he was the Emancipator to whom an immense debt of gratitude was due, and I felt certain that the bulk of the bishops and clergy, whatever path he took, would follow, without weighing too scrupulously the motives of his policy. The middle class, with whom authority counts for so much, would be sure to take the same course. An exceptional man here and there no doubt would stand up for the right at all hazards, and the new generation would probably be with us, but it is not to-day, but to-morrow, that belongs to the exceptional and the young. He had camp-followers who described the Catholic primate as insane for differing with him on an ecclesiastical question, and I knew what we had to expect at the hands of these humane critics. But we had no choice, compatible with honour and self-respect, except to hold on our course, whatever the penalty might be. I thought it right to have a distinct understanding with Mitchel, who had abandoned his profession for the new experiment, and might be regarded as having more individual interests staked on it than any one but me. He was of opinion that O'Connell would probably ruin us; but if the *Nation* must go down, we resolved that it should go down as the crew of the *Vengeur* in those days were supposed to have done—displaying their colours at the mast-head, firing a broadside, and cheering for the good old cause.*

* This was in February, 1846. I breakfasted with Mitchel on the occasion of our consultation, and as we lingered over a well-set table con-

O'Connell's motives are opened to a variety of inferences, and the reader is invited to place the most favourable interpretation he can upon them. But what the mere narrative of events will place beyond reasonable doubt is, that we had not misconceived his purpose of destroying the *Nation*. His second stroke was not a magnanimous one. The defence of Father Davern, undertaken by the Repeal Association, and conducted on the scale on which the business of public bodies is commonly managed, had been costly, and this expenditure it was now proposed to throw upon me. Mr. Potter, the attorney in the case, called on me one morning, "by direction of the Liberator," with a bill of costs exceeding £800. For the sake of the public cause, I had not written a syllable of complaint in the *Nation* on the suppression of popular sympathy in the State prosecution; but this business was conducted in private, and I was free to act on my personal feelings. It so happened that I had never seen Mr. Potter at the time O'Connell selected him to conduct Father Davern's defence. While the case was mine it was placed in the hands of my ordinary solicitor. After glancing at the bill of costs, the question was disposed of in a brief conversation. "Who employed you, Mr. Potter?" I inquired. "I was retained by the Repeal Association," he answered, frankly; "but the Liberator is of opinion that the responsibility is properly yours." "What do you

sidering our ways and means for a contest so unexampled in Ireland, he uttered with a derisive smile a sentence which indicates better than a treatise the impression of the moment. "You must be contented with more meagre fare, I fancy, if you breakfast with me next quarter."

think yourself, Mr. Potter?" "Excuse me, that is not the question." "How were these heavy costs incurred in a case which never came to trial?" "Chiefly in obtaining affidavits from ejected tenants, who were scattered over the world and very difficult to find." "With what plaintiff and defendant's names are the affidavits headed?" "They are probably headed Lord Hawarden *v.* Patrick O'Brien Davern." "Am I Patrick O'Brien Davern?" "No, of course; but Mr. O'Connell thinks——" "Never mind what Mr. O'Connell thinks; the question here is what I think of a claim made upon me personally, and I think it unjust, and will not pay one penny of it. Without the least disrespect to you, I must refer you to the public body by whom you were retained. I never asked Mr. O'Connell to interfere in the Hawarden case; he came into it on his own motion, and for his own purposes, and took it out of my hands, and I will not allow a fine of £800 to be inflicted on me for transgressions very remote from Lord Hawarden. I deny any liability to you; and, if necessary, I will contest the question." The case was kept dangling for several weeks—perhaps, indeed, for several months—and was the subject of repeated conversations in the General Committee. There was a considerable party there who thought it more than enough that I should at that moment be liable to a new prosecution, stimulated by the Repeal Association, without being saddled with its private responsibilities, and they did not conceal their sentiments. O'Connell never made any personal application to me in the business except

through Mr. Potter, and in the end that gentleman wrote to say his costs were paid.

This was a *coup manqué*, but O'Connell was not a man to allow himself to be easily defeated, and he had another and more trenchant stroke in reserve. Before it was struck, however, an important transaction intervened, of which it is necessary to take notice.

To maintain a close alliance with Smith O'Brien was so manifestly the policy of O'Connell, that he took prodigious pains, and did not spare exaggerated eulogy, to preserve it. We have seen in the Federal controversy how promptly he dispatched an elaborate epistle to separate O'Brien from the *Nation*,* and, in the pending prosecution, how Mr. O'Hea's intervention was employed for the same purpose. But, though O'Brien still held aloof from any party connection with the Young Irelanders, he was the personal friend of several of them. He had shown himself impatient under the base suppression of sympathy with the prosecuted journal, and he was openly recalcitrant in the business of a Whig alliance. The displeasure which this independent action excited was probably increased by his mooting a delicate question at an indiscreet time, and in a *maladroit* manner. Ever since O'Connell had promised Gray Porter that the Repeal accounts should be audited and published periodically, the best men in the Association wished the promise to be kept. O'Brien might with great propriety have made the fulfilment of it a condition of his remaining a member. But un-

* "Young Ireland," pp. 601—608.

doubtedly he should have treated with O'Connell personally on such a question. What he did was to write to the secretary, reminding him of the unfulfilled engagement. Mr. Ray's answer must have shown him that by this method he only succeeded in creating ill-will:—

"In reference to your note about the accounts, I should say that perhaps it would be desirable if you were to confer with the Liberator, and hear from himself his opinions. I know he strongly disregards any taunts or remarks of the Orange press, knowing their objects; and I am confident he would give you sufficient reasons to show the inexpediency of publication, especially at the present crisis of emergency."*

What the "present crisis of emergency" was, I have not the slighest idea; if the famine was the crisis in question, it is not clear to me how that calamity would have been aggravated by auditing a public fund. It was frightfully aggravated indeed by the contrary process, which weakened the moral authority of the body that ought to have been the powerful guardian of the people. Within a fortnight of this correspondence with Mr. Ray, O'Brien had another correspondence, which led to very serious consequences. In the previous session of Parliament O'Connell and his son had announced their determination to refuse attending Select Committees; and O'Connell affirmed that the House had not the power to enforce attendance from Ireland.† When the Irish members went to London to

* T. M. Ray to Smith O'Brien, 20th April, 1846.—"Cahirmoyle Correspondence."

† John O'Connell's refusal to sit on committees had been so strong and

resist the Coercion Bill, O'Brien resolved to give effect to this determination, in which he had publicly concurred. In reply to a summons to sit on a Railway Committee, he positively refused. His presence, he said, was required at home, by the deplorable condition of a country threatened with famine; he had attended Parliament only to resist an attempt to suspend the constitutional liberties of the Irish people, and he could not allow his attention to be diverted to matters which did not affect the interests of Ireland. This policy, it must be confessed, was fit only for an heroic period, and was out of harmony with the low tone to which the national feeling had been allowed to subside. But it was a policy becoming the representatives of a nation in the position of eminent danger; and if they had adopted it universally, it would probably have proved irresistible. It may be surmised that O'Brien used it as an expedient to revive public spirit. In that case he ought to have taken care to secure the concurrence of O'Connell, or if this was not to be had, and he was still determined to

specific that it required uncommon courage or callousness to throw over O'Brien. This is the language he had used only the year before:—

"*July* 1*st*, 1845.

"SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of a notification by order of your committee to the effect that my attendance in Parliament will be required during the week beginning Monday, 14th July, for the purpose of serving, if chosen, on a Parliamentary Committee. With every respect to you, Sir, and the gentlemen of your committee, I absolutely decline attending. . . . Under these circumstances, Sir, I certainly will not suffer that portion of the people of Ireland who have intrusted their representation to my charge to be further mocked at and insulted in my person. I go to where I can best discharge my duty to them and to Ireland—*in Ireland*, &c., &c.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

"JOHN O'CONNELL.

"To the Chairman of the Committee of Selection."

proceed, he ought to have consulted the other wing of the party. He does not appear to have done either; nevertheless, he was carrying out a principle which the Association had distinctly sanctioned, and never repudiated, and he was fairly entitled to count on its support. The chairman of the Committee of Selection reported his conduct, and he was asked for an explanation in the House; his motives, he replied, were stated with sufficient clearness in his correspondence with the committee. After some perfunctory debate, in which O'Connell, and Mr. John O'Connell, offered a feeble defence of O'Brien's action, the chairman, without reading his reasons *in extenso*—reading, as O'Brien considered, only such portions as tended to produce an unfavourable impression—moved the House to declare him in contempt; which it did accordingly. By a separate resolution, he was ordered into the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms, on a motion, which was carried without a division. He was committed to an *extempore* place of confinement in the House, which some English journalist, with a genial and gracious humour reserved for Irish transactions, described as a coal-hole. An Irish leader in a coal-hole! After such an anticlimax, what was the use of talking of an Irish question? Regulus in a barrel, however, was not quite the last one heard of Rome and its affairs.

When the news reached Dublin, the Young Irelanders gave a prompt support to the prisoner for Irish rights. I wrote on the question in the *Nation*, and on the same day we moved the General Committee to take it up

in the Association.* O'Connell's practice of treating O'Brien as a man scarcely second in authority and importance to himself, led us to hope there would be no serious opposition; but we were immediately brought face to face with the fact that O'Connell had determined there should be complete silence on the subject. "The safety of the Association," once again, it seems, was in danger. When pressed hard, Captain Broderick produced "a private note from the Liberator," declaring that any indiscreet allusion to the subject might bring us into conflict with the House of Commons, on a question of privilege; and it was further suggested, by some zealous partizan, that approval of O'Brien's conduct would amount to a censure on O'Connell and Mr. John O'Connell, who had consented to serve. The committee, after a long debate, ordered that a resolution of sympathy should be submitted to the next public meeting, two days later, and that it might be unanimous, they agreed to omit any expression of opinion on the question of privilege. The public meeting was unusually large and enthusiastic; but the people did not see below the surface, and had no idea that sympathy with O'Brien had come to imply resistance to the will and policy of O'Connell. Doheny opened the business of the day by a resolution, containing an assurance of "undiminished confidence in O'Brien's integrity, patriotism, and personal courage, and of admiration for the high sense of duty and purity of purpose which prompted him to risk his

* Saturday, May 2nd, 1846. I was accustomed to attend the committees, though no longer a member of the Association, under the new rules.

personal liberty in assertion of a principle which he believed to be inherent in the constitution of his country."

MacNevin insisted on attending to second the motion, though no longer able to deliver a speech. Barry, O'Gorman, and John Lloyd Fitzgerald supported it in language of unmeasured eulogy. In compliance with the understanding arrived at in committee, the legality of O'Brien's action was passed over as a question *sub judice*. Mr. Francis Comyn, a country gentleman, however, expressed his approval of his friend's conduct, "both public and private." When this sentiment was uttered, the Head Pacificator claimed, "for the safety of the Association," that Counsellor Clements be immediately heard. Mr. Clements, who was a barrister in a sort of practice which has as much relation to constitutional law as the making of shoes has to the making of syllogisms, solemnly decided that the safety of the Association would be secured by his stating that they passed no opinion on the act which had placed Mr. O'Brien in his present position. The resolution was carried, the reporters declared, "amid enthusiastic bursts of acclamation." The '82 Club was immediately summoned, and, as the majority were not in any nervous apprehension for the safety of the body, a resolution was carried, by a majority of thirty-five to five, giving unqualified approval to O'Brien's conduct; and an address was ordered to be presented to him in London, embodying this opinion. At the next meeting of the Association, Meagher, who had been absent on the previous

occasion, sustained O'Brien in terms of passionate attachment. He rejoiced that another body had gone lengths in his support from which the Association, in order to be more judicious and legal, had refrained. The Head Pacificator assured the young orator that the caution exercised could not be dispensed with. "That stupendous man, whose political wisdom and profound legal knowledge and acumen, had steered Ireland in safety for nearly fifty years, was of opinion that the Association, watched as it was by the jealous vigilance of the Government, could not, without the most deadly peril to its safety, go further." As the deadly peril did not overtake the '82 Club, which had unhesitatingly gone further, the apprehensions, of which the Head Pacificator was made the mouthpiece, were not extensively shared. One of the bitterest feelings, indeed, at the time was, that O'Connell made a laughing-stock of his countrymen in England, by frightening them with a bogey. The privileges of the House of Commons are asserted against individuals, not against public bodies; it could order any person who resisted its authority, or defamed its character, to be taken into custody; but even in this case, O'Connell had pledged his reputation as a lawyer that the Speaker's warrant had no force in Ireland.

We thought we had accomplished wonders under the circumstances, and I reported the result to O'Brien, not a little proud that we had done on his behalf so much more than he had been able to do on ours, when the same system of repression was employed

against the *Nation*. But O'Brien was far from being satisfied.

"I cannot disguise from you," he wrote to me from his prison in the House of Commons, "that the conduct of the Repeal Association has deeply disappointed me. I am not so much wounded with the apparent disavowal of me which is manifest in the proceedings of Monday last, as I am grieved that the Repeal movement should have sustained a shock in point of character from which it will not easily recover. My decision is formed. If my own constituents abandon me as I have been abandoned in Parliament, and in the Association, I shall retire from the representation of the county of Limerick, leaving myself at liberty to contest on Irish ground, for Irish freedom—but sadly shaken in the confidence which I was disposed to place in the energy and firmness of the Repealers of Ireland."

More than one of the Young Irelanders explained to him the difficulties of the case. MacNevin wrote: "The most active exertions were made to prevent this movement; but your friends (who don't receive £10 a week) carried it triumphantly."* John Pigot went to his place of confinement to say on our behalf much that we were still unwilling to write, respecting the tactics of Mr. John O'Connell's agents, and I sent him a minute account of the impediments which we had to encounter. Still he was not content. He addressed his constituents, announcing that if they disapproved of his conduct he would resign his seat. But the country largely sympathised with him. His constituents sent a

* The practice to which MacNevin refers of bringing paid officers of the Association into the Committee to vote is explained in a note at the end of the chapter.

deputation to London to convey their cordial approval, and popular meetings in Cork, Galway, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Limerick, Cashel, Newry, Ennis, Tuam, and other towns and districts, sent him votes of thanks and confidence. More than a hundred and fifty petitions were presented to the House praying his immediate release. Mitchel, who went to London with the Club deputation, reported the state of affairs to me:—

"He is in excellent spirits, and set out by retracting every peevish expression he had used in writing to you and MacNevin. He is delighted with the conduct of the Limerick people, and is altogether in high hope. He entered fully with us into his notions and intentions, and was as open as we could wish. Pigot will go with us again to-morrow, and we will have further conversation. On the whole, it is evident that, without entering formally into the matter, we can have all the satisfaction we wish for. . . . Altogether, our interview to-night was satisfactory, but popular feeling must be still more excited about it in Ireland. O'B. thinks that O'C. will not accompany us to present the address, but we will of course call and invite him."

Next day Mitchel wrote again, announcing that an influential journalist of the moderate section sympathised with O'Brien:—

"John Gray has written a letter to the editor of the *M. Chronicle*, dealing with the imprisonment of S. O'B. as a constitutional question, affecting the rights of constituents. It is very well written, and O'B. is much pleased with it. Gray asked me if we would publish it in the *Nation*, to which I answered that I thought it well worth publishing, and would write to you by to-day's post about it. He is very well disposed in this business, and is going with us to-morrow to present the address, so that I think it would be very well done to publish it, independent of its own merits."

O'Connell did not accompany the deputation,* having, he affirmed, received insufficient notice; but after the proceedings in Repeal Committee, it must be conceded that to invite him to concur in unmeasured approval of O'Brien's conduct was imposing an impossible task upon him. Meagher was of opinion that he "received them with such marked coldness that it was evident there could be no cordial co-operation thereafter." It was the first time dissent had been brought home to him as a fact of which he must take account, and it established a permanent sore. When the deputation had left London, however, he visited O'Brien. "O'Connell has been at the prison several times," John Pigot wrote to me, "and the disagreement is patched by throwing all [the blame] on the deputation. But it *is*, I am happy to say, patched up, and I believe it will remain so."

It was difficult, however, to believe in peace; for the *Pilot*, three times a week, still ridiculed the policy of defying Parliament, and pelted O'Brien's friends with such malodorous missiles as the Yahoos flung at their enemies, or Theodore Hook at Whig ladies who paid their respects to Queen Caroline. The *Nation* and the Young Irelanders, in the interest of the public cause, kept O'Connell's name out of the controversy. Looking back, after the interval of a generation, I can affirm that they were generous, and even magnanimous, in

* The deputation consisted of Captain Bryan, Mitchel, Meagher, Richard O'Gorman, Doheny, and T. B. McManus, of Liverpool. They startled St. Stephen's by appearing in the green and gold uniform of the Eighty-two Club.

their self-restraint. Two paragraphs alone could be fished out of their writings or speeches as presumable exceptions. John Fisher Murray wrote of O'Brien as "The Man in prison for Ireland," in terms which were supposed to contrast him with the leader of the movement and his son; and it is difficult to doubt that such a contrast was present to the writer's mind:—

"Mr. O'Brien will not lug in religion by the head and shoulders upon all occasions, in season and out of season, giving a polemical colour to an agitation purely political; religion is well guarded by those who are called to do it, and they are its fittest guardians. Mr. O'Brien is neither a council, nor a convocation, nor a cleric; his business is to unite all Irishmen, and he minds his business. He does not blow hot and cold upon Repeal; he does not palter with his principle, at one time whispering it like a sucking dove, at another bellowing it out like all the bulls of Bashan; if the Whigs were in, or likely to be in, to-morrow, Mr. O'Brien would be Mr. O'Brien still. You know what he is at, and where to have him; what he says he means, and what he means he'll stick to."

The other paragraph was from a review of Mr. John O'Connell's edition of his father's speeches, and I was the offender. I quoted a passage in which O'Connell is described as superseding the policy of John Keogh—who, in his old age, had become somewhat feeble and driftless—by a vigorous proposal of his own; which, however, he could only get adopted in the Catholic organisations of that day by pretending to agree in the main with Keogh, at the very moment he meditated reversing and undoing his work. On this text I speculated in these terms:—

"A naked truth is as frightful to weak minds as a naked corpse. Men would read it with pleasure and applause at this time of day if the new leader had proclaimed his mission in as many words; but, good Heavens! how he would have outraged the public feeling of the era, which still clung to its old traditional hopes, though they had long since grown grey with age and disappointment. It would have been the simple truth if he had said, 'My friends, good old John Keogh has done his work, and can (Nature having imperatively so provided) do no more. For some years he has been leading us nowhere. We have not advanced one step for a lustrum; on the contrary, we have gone back many steps. This must not be. Our business is to go forward. Who will show us the way? If no other, I—even I [Daniel O'Connell]—have a straight, simple road in view, and with God's help I will lead you on it.'"

This paragraph, it was insisted by all Old Ireland, was intended to be read, *mutato nomine*, of the leader of our own day. The passage seems to me to smack of literary coxcombry, and to handle a dangerous subject with undue levity, but I can confidently affirm there was no more design to depose the leader among the Young Irelanders, than there was a design to depose the Queen among the Young Englanders of the same era.*

* Another passage in the same review gave grave offence, but I am still of opinion that it was a statement proper and necessary to be made. Mr. John O'Connell made the Life of his father a party pamphlet, in the interest of his personal ambition. When any one was found opposing the popular view of what were called the "Wings" in Catholic politics (the "Wings" which it was supposed would enable Emancipation to fly; *i.e.*, a veto entrusted to the English Crown on the appointment in Catholic bishops in Ireland, and a stipend to the Catholic clergy), Mr. John O'Connell called attention to those offenders who quarrelled with bishops a generation earlier as closely resembling the supporters of the new College in 1845. This was past human patience, and I wrote: "It is strange that Mr. John O'Connell should forget that the only assailants of bishops in our day have been the slanderers of Dr. Crolly, who are not friends to the new colleges;

These paragraphs were quoted with delight by men who wished the Association to be "purged," as evidence that the Young Irelanders wanted to set up a new leader. They were alluded to in Conciliation Hall, and O'Gorman, Barry, and Doheny denied in the warmest manner that they were enemies of the eminent man to whom, as Irish Catholics, they were under such obligation. They only desired that the Association should pursue the old policy under the old leader, and Mitchel, in the *Nation*, declared our opinions and wishes on the subject with strict fidelity to the fact:—

"As to deposing O'Connell from the Leadership of the Irish People, we have met with no man insane enough to propose or contemplate that. The thing is not possible. O'Connell wields the Irish millions, and he alone—he has wielded them for forty years; and we know of no man, or set of men, able to wrest the leading staff out of his hand. Whithersoever, how far so ever the Irish nation goes, he will be at their head to his dying day. All we mean to insist upon is this—that we will be lead to the goal whither we are bound; we will not go back, or stand still: we will be led, but it must be forward—forward! O'Connell is our leader, and must remain our leader; he has mighty power, mighty responsibility: let him lead us, in God's name—and full sure we are he will not lead a trusting people astray, to his own eternal peril and our ignominious defeat and destruction."

The House of Commons held O'Brien three weeks

but, on the contrary, agree with Mr. John O'Connell in every opinion he holds, and will inevitably agree with him on any other opinions he may please to hold for the future. And it is stranger still he should forget that his illustrious father was for full seventy years of his life the friend of mixed education, and at one eventful period the vehement advocate of a pensioned priesthood—recollections which, one would say, might have protected men who prefer concurring in his seventy years' rather than in his seventeen months' experience, and who do not share his temporary opinion in favour of a State-paid clergy, from imputations of corruption or irreligion."

in prison. After the first week it was discovered that the Committee of Selection, whose summons he had disobeyed, was not appointed in exact conformity with the Standing Orders. A motion to this effect was proposed and defeated by a large majority; for the House of Commons, ordinarily strict and even pedantic in its construction of parliamentary law, has always, before and since, shown itself ready to subordinate its pedantry to its prejudice against Ireland. Mr. Shaw, the Recorder of Dublin, gave notice of a motion that the authority of the House having been adequately vindicated, Mr. O'Brien should be discharged from custody. O'Brien entreated him to desist, lest it be supposed the motion was made with his sanction. But Mr. Shaw properly replied that, as he had not acted at his instigation, neither would he withdraw at his instigation; he brought on a motion, and Sir Robert Peel assenting, it was carried without opposition. O'Brien left prison, consoling himself with the reflection that during six hundred years no man, whether of Norman, Saxon, or Celtic origin, had distinguished himself in defence of Ireland without becoming an object of persecution to the statesmen in London.

Meetings and petitions, speeches and newspaper articles, made it plain, past controversy, that a powerful section of the nation approved of O'Brien's course. O'Connell probably resolved to set himself right with this opinion, for he re-appeared at Conciliation Hall, and treated O'Brien, not as a braggart who had been

endangering the safety of the Association, but as a soldier returning from a victorious campaign :—

"Our enemies rejoiced. They said, 'Oh, the Association is divided—O'Connell is against O'Brien and O'Brien is against O'Connell.' What will they say to-day? I will tell them this—that I would not consent to continue a member of the Association one hour unless William Smith O'Brien was my comrade, my colleague, and my co-equal in the struggle. I tell them there is only one thing that would make me despair of Ireland, and that would be that we should do anything to induce William Smith O'Brien to quit the ranks in which he has so bravely fought for Ireland."

In conclusion, forgetting "the safety of the Association," put in "deadly peril" by open disrespect for the House of Commons, he proposed that the fees to the Sergeant-at-Arms should be defrayed out of the Repeal rent, and that Mr. O'Brien should receive a triumphal entry on his return to Dublin, and a national banquet immediately after. When these proposals were communicated to O'Brien, he suggested an amendment, that any demonstration in his favour should be postponed till the 6th September, the day the Repeal prisoners were liberated in 1844, and should be made to commemorate both events. The amendment was adopted. It was now June, but before the 6th September had arrived O'Connell and O'Brien were separated by a new controversy, to meet no more in this world.

To the public outside, serenity and good-will seemed to reign once more in Conciliation Hall, but the Young Irelanders were warned by well-informed persons to expect a sudden storm, unless along with peace they

accepted a Whig alliance. The representation of Kilkenny became vacant at this moment, and, as I wished to see Meagher in Parliament, I wrote to Dr. Cane to suggest him as a candidate. Dr. Cane was a physician in large and profitable practice, chiefly among the gentry of the midland counties. His private interest beckoned him away from national politics, but his tastes and sympathies drew him towards them, and he was just then in a public position, being mayor of the city. He was my personal friend, and had been an intimate friend of Davis's, but, like O'Brien, he still avoided any positive identification with Young Ireland. In reply to my suggestion he wrote :—

"Meagher would have no chance here—a month since he would—but now he has a host of enemies! He is considered as O'Connell's enemy. My dear Duffy, look sharp and urge caution upon your friends. I have been long foreseeing mischief—mischief dire to Ireland from internal feuds. I urged caution often upon poor Davis, and foretold him the collision he fell into, but he did not credit it. I cannot now go into particulars, but *at once* prepare Meagher and Doheny for a blow. Let their course be dignified and cautious, without anger, passion, or enmity. It may come on Monday—will not be deferred much later. Above all, do nothing that can drag O'Brien or others into any collision which might still more widely sever Ireland's friends."

About the same time, it is impossible to fix the date with absolute certainty, O'Connell sent for me, and asked me to bring Mitchel with me, whom since the railway article he treated as peculiarly hazardous to the safety of the Association. He wanted to ascertain, he said, if it was possible to go on with us in peace. After

six and thirty years I will not attempt to detail the conversation which ensued. As he was a man able to digest that most drastic of medicines, the truth, I have no doubt we told him frankly what was said in whispers of his designs respecting the Whigs and the Young Irelanders. On his part, he was certainly too discreet to propose nakedly the alternative that we should support the Whigs or pay a heavy penalty for declining to do so. But he contrived to intimate distinctly that unless we gave him satisfaction (in the matter of the safety of the Association, of course) it would be his duty to end all connection between the journal and the Repeal organisation. This was the stroke held in reserve, and it was a trenchant stroke. Every locality contributing £10 to the Repeal rent was at liberty to select a weekly journal, of which the Association paid the subscription out of the remittance. The popularity of the *Nation* had won it a decided preference, and more than a thousand copies went weekly to Repeal wardens and Repeal reading-rooms. The profit on the transaction was over £1,000 a year, a considerable proportion of the income of a newspaper in a country where money was scarce; and we were invited to ponder on that alternative at leisure.

At this time, I was still at work in the Dublin mountains, trying by fits and starts to write history within hearing of political clamour. In the middle

* The number of *Nations* circulated by the Association was about a thousand, paid for at the rate of 26s. per annum each. As these additional copies were printed from type already set, the cost of producing them was only the price of paper and stamps and the charge for machining.

of June, Mitchel came out of a sudden to exhort me to throw it aside and return to the *Nation* office. He had received sure information that, notwithstanding the serenity of Conciliation Hall, we were about to be denounced by one or more bishops as infidels, and other events were at hand, which might render the Library of Ireland waste paper. I rolled up the unfinished MS. and returned to my post.

O'Brien was scarcely released from the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms till my turn had apparently arrived to become a State prisoner. It was six months since I had been held to bail in the prosecution for the railway article, and the trial was now about to take place. Mr. Pennefather had retired from the Chief Justiceship, which was considered a fortunate incident; but seldom, says the proverb, comes a better. It was in doubt for a time whether Mr. Smith, the Attorney-General, who conducted the State prosecutions in 1844, or Mr. Blackburne, the Master of the Rolls, who distinguished himself in the same line a little earlier, should get the office. Finally, Mr. Smith was sent to the Rolls, and Blackburne, a more subtle and dangerous man than his predecessor or his competitor, promoted to the Chief Justiceship. The hyena, it was whispered among disaffected juniors in the Four Courts, was to be replaced by the black snake. That a trial before such a Chief Justice and a jury of Castle tradesmen would end as the last State prosecution had ended few of us doubted; and if the zeal of the judge led

him to misdirect the jury, there was no Repeal Treasury to bear the cost of suing out a writ of error. The private correspondence of the period takes a conviction for granted. Dillon was still in Madeira, where Richard Sheil was also at the time, evading the rigour of an English winter, and his report of that experienced advocate's estimate of the chances of a popular journalist before a packed jury in Dublin, may be commended to the attention of Englishmen:—

"I was observing to Sheil the other day," Dillon wrote, "that it was a loss neither he nor Whiteside could be had for this occasion. 'By G——, Sir,' he says, 'as far as the verdict is concerned it is a matter of perfect indifference whether he is defended by Cicero or Burke Bethel.' I forgot to tell you that I have got rid of my cough. I wish to heaven they would sentence you to transportation to Madeira for six months.

"'Your health is reasonably good,' one of my watchful friends in London wrote. That won't do at all; you must make it unreasonably good. As there is a chance of your going into gaol, do, I conjure you, endeavour, during the time you have, to get strong, that you may despise bolts and bars."

And, again, in the pleasant badinage which makes a letter read like a friendly tête-à-tête:—

"For the rest, I think they will put you in jail (*dissentiente Pigoto, i.e.*, dissentient from my opinion), but depend upon it, if you take care of yourself, it will do you no harm. . . . It will be such a comfort that you will not be up for the fourth time before your friend Pennefather; but then, to be sure, both Tom Smith and Blackburne are acquaintances of yours. Happy to have such a circle of friends! I'm sorry I'm not over there to be your junior counsel, but never mind, there's a good time coming. With the help of God, this won't be the last prosecution against you!"

A Castle jury seemed scarcely necessary to secure a conviction. Conciliation Hall and the Crown lawyers had equally declared against the defendant, and a few days before the trial the leader of another great party joined the chorus of reprobation. On the eve of the trial a report came from London that Peel, having carried Free Trade, would soon fall from office, and be succeeded by the Whigs, supported by O'Connell. The fall of Peel would involve the abandonment of the prosecution; but the *Nation* strongly denounced the policy of Irish members supporting Lord John Russell while he continued an Anti-Repealer. The Whig leader was constitutionally too cold and haughty to be enlisted openly in a conspiracy against a newspaper, but he was not a magnanimous opponent, and it probably needed only that some convenient go-between should suggest the good policy of his discriminating between Repealers prepared to welcome his party back to office, and the ill-conditioned section wicked enough to reject that blessing. At any rate he took occasion to declare in the House of Commons that the *Nation* was a journal which desired, not a parliament such as it was the boast of Grattan to have founded, but was the organ of a party which excited every species of violence, which looked to disturbance as its means, and separation from England as its end.* It is not easy

* "There is a numerous body in Ireland—numerous even among her representatives—which says that no legislation of a united parliament can devise fit remedies for Irish grievances, and that it is in a domestic parliament alone that fit and wise legislation can be looked for. There are others, I fear, who, if I read rightly their sentiments as expressed in a newspaper—I will name it—called the *Nation*, which has great circula-

to describe this statement in language of controversial courtesy; in truth, a fouler libel never issued from a human throat. The reader is in a position to judge whether the *Nation* preached disturbance and social disorder as its means. Even on the question of ends, there was no party in Ireland at that time which would not have accepted, and loyally guarded, a constitution modelled on that of 1782. Such a party arose, as we shall see, but it sprang from circumstances not yet developed. Jurors, however, had due notice from these high authorities what their duty was in the premises.

On the 17th June a jury was sworn to try Charles Gavan Duffy for a false and defamatory libel concerning her Majesty's Government and its administration, published with the design to stir up discontent, and to excite the subjects to oppose her Majesty's troops employed in execution of the law. Mr. Greene, who was promoted to the Attorney-Generalship, conducted the case. His speech consisted of the ordinary platitudes of a State prosecution. He admitted the right of every subject of the realm to discuss public questions in a fair and temperate manner, and such a right ought not to be weighed in too nice a scale; but if ever this fair boundary was overstepped—if ever, under the pretence of fair discussion, a mischievous, malicious,

tion in Ireland, who go beyond that question of the Legislative Union—who would wish not merely to have such a parliament as that which it was the boast of Grattan to found, and which legislated under the sceptre of the same Sovereign as the Parliament of Great Britain, but a party which exerts every species of violence, which looks to disturbance as its means, and regards separation from England as its end."—*Lord John Russell, House of Commons, June*, 1846.

and seditious object was contemplated—and so forth, it was in this case. The defendant was represented by Mr. Holmes, Mr. O'Hagan*, Sir Colman O'Loghlen, and Mr. M. J. Barry. Mr. Holmes was past eighty, a handsome and venerable old man, the father of the bar, held in that grave respect which is won by a long life of independence and integrity. He had taken no part in Irish politics since the Union; and he had refused a silk gown, and subsequently political office, that he might owe no obligation to either English party. But nearly half a century earlier he had been a State prisoner, charged with complicity in rebellion, and, as the relation between the countries had not substantially altered in the interim, his opinions, though they lay far below the surface, and were scarcely suspected by his associates at the bar, were also substantially unaltered. He was a Unitarian, who went circuit in Ulster, and in his professional capacity possessed more than anyone the confidence of the commercial classes in the North. Happy, says the philosopher, is the man whose youth and age are in accord. Robert Holmes, the *doyen* of his profession, the silent and somewhat stern old man, overflowing in sarcastic pleasantries, whom the untaught multitudes knew as the "enemy of the Liberator," because he resented insults flung on the grave of his early friends, was about to enjoy this supreme happiness. He represented a cause and a party who had won his respect and sympathy, and

* The present Lord O'Hagan.

he made their case his own. If ever assent was wrung from the conscience of unwilling jurors by the passionate conviction and persuasive eloquence of an advocate, it was in this case.

He opened by expressing his satisfaction that he appeared for a journal which had never been defiled by attacks on private character; but which, with respect to public measures and public men, took a determined course.

"The jury were about to decide whether Mr. Duffy had been guilty of seditious libel; but there was no fact of which men could form a fair opinion without taking into consideration the circumstances preceding or attending it. One man, for example, deprives another of life; under certain circumstances this would be murder, under other circumstances it would be manslaughter, but under different conditions it would be no offence whatever, but what the law calls a justifiable homicide. He meant to found his defence in the present case on the fact that Ireland had been all along, and was at that hour, treated as a conquered country; and the people of a country so treated had certain natural rights, which were precisely the rights insisted upon in the prosecuted article. It was charged in the indictment that the writer incited the people to attack the Queen's troops when they were 'carrying into execution the laws and the constitution,' but not so; the writer argued that if the Queen's troops were employed to oppress the people contrary to law, the resistance would be justifiable, and that the agencies of aggression with which the people were threatened might be employed for their defence. It was undeniably true that if force were used for the purpose of stifling the voice of the people calling constitutionally for any particular measure, resistance under such circumstances would be justifiable.* The

* When this doctrine was applied retrospectively to the suppression of the Clontarf meeting, O'Connell's submission to the Castle proclamation on

true criterion of liberty was the right of a people to make laws for their own government; any people subject to laws made for them by another country was not a free people. That Ireland was a subject country, not entitled to make laws for herself, even when she had a separate parliament, but bound to accept such laws as England might think proper to make for her, was the doctrine laid down by so eminent a judge as Lord Mansfield, and stated in specific terms in Blackstone. These jurists taught in effect that Irishmen might be slaughtered as enemies, if they did not submit to be governed as slaves. But if force were accepted as a just foundation of government, the sword of Mahomet might as well be accepted as a just foundation of religion. In 1719 an Act was passed by the English Parliament, not only distinctly declaring their right to legislate for Ireland, but denying the right of the Irish House of Lords to hear appeals from, or exercise any jurisdiction over, courts of justice in their own country. By the energy of Grattan and Flood, and sixty thousand volunteers in arms, this Act was repealed, and another was passed in the Imperial Parliament, by which the right of the Irish parliament to make laws for Ireland and to hear appeals from Irish courts was declared to be 'ascertained and established for ever, and at no time thereafter to be questioned or questionable.' If there was such a thing as faith or honour among nations, the faith and honour of England were pledged that Ireland should ever after be bound only by laws made in her own parliament. Was that faith kept? No; before twenty years the Act of Parliament was annihilated, and the Union passed. It was resisted by all the talent, the public spirit, and the virtue of the land; it was passed by the most unprincipled and barefaced corruption. The private corruption might be fancied, but there was moreover a public bill-of-sale, 40th Geo. III. ch. 24, by which a million and a half sterling were divided to compensate bodies corporate and individuals who ceased to elect members after the Union. The scanty product

that occasion was pronounced to be a manifest abandonment of a constitutional right.

of his sweating brow was wrung from the peasant's hard hand to grease the itching palm of perfidy. It was now, however, treated as seditious libel to call on England to redeem her broken faith, and the jury were required to pass a verdict confirmatory of this claim.

"His contention was that Ireland had never, except for a brief interval, enjoyed the right of making her own laws. Did she at that moment enjoy this right which constitutes the basis of freedom? The population of Ireland was more than half that of England and Wales, but in the House of Lords the Irish peers were not a ninth part of what England possessed, and in the Commons the proportion was five to one in favour of England. He asserted, as a constitutional lawyer, that the true principle of freedom, which is that a country shall have power to make laws for its own government, was not possessed by Ireland in the nineteenth century. The laws were made by an English majority to which she could offer no effectual opposition. It was a fallacy and a mockery to speak of Ireland as a free country under such circumstances. The jury must apply this argument to the case before them. The real meaning of the article indicted was that if the sword should be employed to put down opinion, and the railways used to facilitate the conveyance of troops for that purpose, resistance would be justifiable. And undoubtedly it would. This was the law of nature, and it was the constitution of the realm. Blackstone, who disposed of Irish rights with such admirable coolness, laid down, as among the rights of Englishmen, the right to possess arms to defend their liberties if they were invaded. It was nearly a century and a half since Molyneux, the friend of Locke, demonstrated that conquest could give England no rightful dominion over Ireland; the English Minister could not answer the book, and, like Omar, he burned it. The population of Ireland had since doubled, and now in an age of science and knowledge, all the powers of nature were being made subservient to the use and benefit of man, but the great mass of that population were living in hovels not fit for the beasts that perished. Rents must be paid,

taxes must be paid, and what remained to support life? One vegetable product alone.

"Turn from the physical to the moral and political condition of Ireland. She had not been allowed to educate and develop herself by her own talents, her own spirit, her own industry. An education had been forced on her from without by a country which studied to check a growth which she feared. She was seized in an age of weakness, and thrust out of the sphere of light. The education of a people was not the changing of a garment, the cutting of a beard, or a *culun*, the substitution of the English for the Brehon law, the gibbet for the eric, or even the foundation of Protestant Charter Schools, or an ecclesiastical seminary for priests. The education of a people was the formation of its intellectual, its moral, and its political character, measured by its advancement in manners, in science, in arts and literature; in manufactures, in industry and commerce, by the general diffusion of knowledge and virtue, and the comforts, conveniences, and refinements of existence. But these blessings only came to nations possessing some common and invigorating principle of life and action. What was this common invigorating principle? Country; the proud feeling of national existence, by means of which every success is reflected from the individual to the State and from the State to the individual, and virtue, fame, and fortune are enjoyed by the possessor in the twofold character of a man and a citizen. A free State and its members are one. The rulers and the ruled have no conflicting interests; a love of the commonwealth, the fruitful source of generous sentiments and noble deeds, animates and dignifies the individual, and exalts the social above the selfish affections. But where this common and vigorating principle is wanting, where a people is subservient to the will, mocked by the pride, and ruled by the caprice, the passions, and the interests of another State, that people will inevitably betray the vileness of its condition. National independence does not necessarily lead to national virtue and happiness, but reason and experience demonstrate that public spirit and general happiness are looked

for in vain under the withering influence of provincial subjection. The soil of Attica was still warmed by the same sun which fostered the genius of Phidias and Pericles, but liberty was gone, and the glory which adorned that rugged and scanty territory now only lives in the records of fame. For many a long century Ireland had been schooled and scourged as a province, and she wandered through a dreary existence without the central principle of light and warmth. It was not the sword which destroyed the body, as much as the policy that laid waste the mind, which Ireland had reason to deplore. A light once shone across the gloom, bright and glorious, but transient, only serving to show the darkness that had gone before and the darkness that followed. That light was extinguished by the foulest means that fraud or tyranny ever practised, and now it seemed any attempt to rekindle it was to be treated as sedition, and the sentence of dependence and degradation pronounced against Ireland to be confirmed and made perpetual. Against this sentence his client had raised his voice; and not only on his client's behalf, but on behalf of an injured and insulted country, he exhorted the jury to avert that sentence. He did not ask their verdict as the boon of mercy, or the safety-valve of doubt, but as the unequivocal expression of their regard for the rights of nature and the welfare and honour of their native land."

The effect of this speech was like an experiment in electricity; a dull inert mass was kindled with sudden fire. Jurors who had gone into the box cautious tradesmen, prudent, and perhaps a little sordid, were raised for a moment to the enthusiasm of patriots, and would have suffered themselves to be killed rather than have sanctioned by their verdict the degradation of their country. It was perhaps the simplest and yet the loftiest statement of the rights and claims of Ireland that had ever been addressed to jury or senate. The

Chief Justice bade them put out of their minds a speech which "had never been surpassed in a court of justice." They had to determine simply whether the defendant had published the article in question with all or any of the intents charged in the indictment, for the publication in his belief was clearly a seditious libel. Railways, it said, must not be allowed to become the means of transport for invading armies. Did these armies mean the troops of her Majesty employed in executing the law, or did they mean the Queen's troops put in motion for the purpose of acting against or in violation of the law? He did not see any great difference, in point of sedition, whether the passage were invested with one character or the other. If there were a third or innocent sense that could be given to it, it would be their duty to acquit the defendant. But they must confine their attention to the issue, and put out of account the variety of subjects introduced into the eloquent address of counsel.

If a judge in England directed a jury that it was a matter of indifference whether the resistance advised was resistance against the law or only resistance against an abuse of the law, one can fancy the commotion which would ensue in Westminster Hall and the adjoining edifice; but in Ireland public justice was still in the stage of development it had reached in England under the Stuarts.

After the jury had retired for some hours, the sheriff was instructed to ascertain if they had agreed. He reported they had not agreed, and that they assured

him they never could agree. They were locked up all night without meat, drink, fire, or light; but this stringent measure did not reduce them to subjection. At 10 o'clock next morning they were summoned into court and interrogated, but they gave the same answer, that agreement was impossible. The Chief Justice ordered them to be again locked up, and it was only after they had been four and twenty hours without food or drink that they were discharged. The division in the jury was understood to be nearly equal, five for an acquittal, seven for a conviction.

The one subject which engrossed conversation in the city and throughout Ireland was Mr. Holmes's speech. "It was splendid," Sir Colman O'Loghlen wrote to O'Brien; "I never heard an abler or more eloquent address. For a man of eighty it was a marvellous effort." * "God bless the old veteran!" John Pigot wrote to me; "I am rejoiced he had an opportunity of closing his honest life by a brave protest and appeal for Ireland." "I wish," O'Brien wrote, "that we could hear such language in Conciliation Hall as Mr. Holmes was not ashamed to utter in the Queen's Bench." † It was a defence such as O'Connell, before the torpor of age and disappointment had paralysed his faculties, might have delivered. It was strictly constitutional, founding the rights of the country on principles universally recognised by jurists and statesmen as the bases of liberty. To have this

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence, June 18th.

† *Nation* Correspondence.

great argument by a great lawyer revised and published in a permanent shape was an obvious duty. It was suggested in the Repeal Committee that it was the most powerful stimulus applied to public opinion since the Corporation Debate, and ought to be circulated among the Association tracts. But O'Connell, in a private letter to Mr. Ray, hastened to forbid any recognition of it. It is not strange that he did not regard it with a friendly eye; it rendered pitiful his precautions for the safety of the Association; it was a victory for a party upon whom he was about to make war; and it was the work of a man whom he detested. Mr. Holmes, indeed, had given him keen provocation; and politicians do not find it easy to forgive their enemies; but it is as certain as any conjecture can be that Davis or O'Brien would have welcomed to the national party so important a recruit, though he were his bitterest assailant. In forbidding the publication, O'Connell strained his authority; the subject was taken up by the '82 Club, and at a meeting where he occupied the chair as president, its immediate issue at a nominal price was unanimously ordered.* The Club to whom the initiative seemed to be rapidly passing from the torpid Association also declared their readiness to pay the costs of a trial which they regarded as a great triumph of public liberty. I declined the offer, as I

* Lord Brougham, whom hatred of O'Connell usually made unjust to Irish nationality, cited Mr. Holmes's speech with emphatic praise. "He could not refer to, without expressing his sense of the great ability and learning displayed by that venerable lawyer in that publication which he had read with the greatest admiration."—House of Lords, February, 1847.

declined similar offers before and after, to keep the character of the *Nation* clear of sordid aims. On this occasion the sacrifice was a trifle; Mr. O'Hagan, Sir Colman O'Loghlen, and Mr. Barry refused to accept any fees; Mr. Mitchel acted as attorney in the case, and the costs out of pocket were inconsiderable.

NOTE ON CHAPTER IV.

PAID OFFICERS ON THE COMMITTEE OF THE REPEAL ASSOCIATION.

The practice to which MacNevin refers—of bringing paid officers of the Association into the Committee to out-vote independent members—had been constantly resisted by the Young Irelanders, with only partial success. In October, 1844, Dr. Nagle, a doctor without patients, who fetched and carried for Mr. John O'Connell, was constituted editor of the Association Reports, with a commensurate salary; Dr. Nagle being a person who might as fitly have been appointed to regulate the solar system. O'Brien made a grave remonstrance, and Maurice O'Connell hastened to assure him that "the suggestion came from Ray"—a practical man, and that the editor was not to be editor after all—"would, in fact, exercise no control; only correct typographical errors."* MacNevin burst into a generous rage and threatened to retire from the Committee. "By my honour," he said, "it is the most insufferable job that brutal familiarity with the public funds ever begot!" Davis, who never forgot that in human affairs you must see much go astray, and be content to guard essentials, only insisted that the new stipendiary should retire from the Committee, and permitted him to enter on the enjoyment of his sinecure without further controversy. But the Head Pacificator and others continued to be members of the Committee, while living on its funds, a practice which proved a serious inconvenience.

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

CHAPTER V.

THE WHIG ALLIANCE AND THE PEACE RESOLUTIONS.

To bring into clear view transactions on which the fate of O'Connell and the country now turned, it will be necessary to make a short detour. Ten days before Mr. Holmes's speech there was a conference of parliamentary Whigs at Lord John Russell's residence in Chesham Place, and among the supporters who gathered round the expectant Minister, Repealers read with consternation the names of O'Connell and his son John.

A correspondent of the *Dublin Evening Mail* professed to report the proceedings, and attributed to O'Connell the declaration that "all he ever wanted was a real Union—the same laws and franchises in the two countries." The *Mail* had a party interest in misrepresenting the case, and the Young Irelanders clung to the hope that this story of open surrender was untrue. At the very moment O'Brien was receiving in Munster an ovation, under a banner on which was emblazoned "Repeal and no Surrender," and the Association, at the instance of O'Connell himself, had invited him to a national banquet, in the same spirit. Mitchel wrote on the subject in the next *Nation*, with a frankness and vigour suitable to the emergency:—

"O'Connell did not say this, or anything like this—he neither said nor thought it—and no Repealer, even if he were base enough to think it, would dare whisper it in the solitude of his chamber, lest the very birds of the air might carry the matter to an Irish ear. Heaven and earth! what would those words, in the mouth of a Repealer, mean? Listen to us, Irishmen, and we will tell you. They would mean that for four years past—at some thousand meetings—through five million throats—from Tara and Mullaghmast—from palaces of Irish kings and graves of Irish martyrs, Ireland has been bellowing forth one monstrous lie in the face of all mankind and of God Almighty—one loud, many-voiced national lie, which the vales re-echoed to the hills, and they to heaven. . . In the meantime, let the truth be told: let us not pretend to give up or postpone Repeal, in order that English ministers may more readily yield us that justice which they have delayed as long as they could; let no Repealer dare to hint that a 'real Union' would satisfy us—let us avow, and make all men clearly understand, that what we are determined to have now is, not "justice to Ireland or Repeal," but "justice to Ireland and Repeal."*

As a natural result, the next week brought Lord John Russell's description of the *Nation*, already cited, as a journal preaching violence and social disorder.

While the Whig compact was still only a subject of conjecture the Young Irelanders determined to treat it in Conciliation Hall as incredible and impossible. In their eyes it was treason—treason which they would have died rather than commit, and for which death would be a lenient penalty. Meagher undertook to open the question. He had brought to the party a force which they never possessed in perfection before—a born orator; one who could translate the philosophy

* *Nation*, May 13, 1846.

of the closet into the language of popular passion, for, like a great actor, he sometimes interpreted with admirable fidelity opinions which, though he shared, he did not originate. His speeches resembled all the great speeches which had maintained a place in political literature, in being carefully prepared; but they wanted what the greatest still aimed to attain—simplicity and ease. He was too young to understand the subtle charm of these qualities, and Grattan and Sheil had trained the national taste to revel in a style which was florid and exuberant. But whatever he spoke was graced by the play of a lively fancy, and penetrated by a fire of conviction hard to resist.

It was reported, he said, that the Whigs were coming back to office, but whatever statesmen ruled the empire, the policy of the Repeal Association would remain unchanged. The Whigs counted on the apostacy of Repealers, the Conservatives predicted it, but the people had vowed before God and man to raise up a nation in these western waters, and make it as free as the freest that bore a flag on the sea or guarded a senate on the land. Let them recede, and they would win the applause of Whig orators; but France would placard them as cowards, and America indict them as swindlers. It was to the young men of Ireland, the trustees of its prosperity, the tempters offered the chalice of corruption.

"Young men, said they, a long life is before you—the luxuries of office and the privileges of place. To taste the former, to assume the latter, you must qualify by recreancy, renounce the manly duties, reject the pure honours of honest citizenship, cease to be the unpaid servants of your country, become the hirelings of party. You have read the history of Ireland; disclaim the doctrines of Grattan and Flood; accept the maxims, emulate the perfidy, of Castlereagh and Fitzgibbon. You are scholars, and have read the histories of Greece and Rome. From the story of Athens learn nothing but the obedience of the Helots. From the

chronicles of Rome learn, if you like, the imperial ambition of the Cæsars, but forget the stern patriotism of the Scipios and the Gracchi. Thus will you climb to power, gain access to the viceregal table, and be invited to masquerades at Windsor. Thus, if your ambition be parliamentary, will you qualify for Melborne-Port* and other convenient Whig boroughs; and when at length removed from that country whose wretchedness would have been an incessant drain upon your resources, and when mingling in the lordly society of London, or sitting on the Treasury Bench beside your patrician benefactors, you will bless the Government that patronized servility, and thank God that you have a country to sell!"

The Head Pacificator considered this admonition quite needless; it was identical with the doctrine taught by O'Connell, the august, the almost sanctified moral-force revolutionist. It would be in place addressed to men wavering under the advent of the Whigs, but it was not becoming advice to tender to men prosecuting their object for years, like the Repealers and their leader O'Connell.

Mr. O'Gorman thought his friend had spoken truly and well and at the fitting time. A suspicion was abroad; if it was ill-founded, no harm was done in re-stating the policy of the Association. Some such suspicion did exist, and this clearly was the time to meet and trample it down.

Mr. O'Mahony affirmed that these suspicions had arisen from an article in the last *Nation* which gave them recognition and currency.

The chairman, a Mr. Delahunty, from Waterford, whom that city long after sent to Parliament, to make sport for English caricaturists, thought it his duty to declare that Meagher's warning implied an insult to the Liberator.

Mr. Mitchel avowed that he agreed in every syllable Mr. Meagher had spoken, and thought that was the time and place to speak it. The *Nation*, to which the gentleman had alluded, found an audacious calumny in circulation, and, being a Repeal journal, mentioned it to deny it. If the Repealers were to retreat from their position and enter into a compact once more with English factions, the best thing they could do was to shut up the hall, lock the door, go home to their respective businesses, and

* The allusion was to Sheil, who sat for a time as member for the English pocket-borough of Melborne-Port.

for ever after hang their head when men spoke of honour, patriotism, or truth.

Captain Broderick declared that any one who threw a doubt on his principles insulted him. He would not, for his part, ask men if they intended to support a cause they had been advocating for years, for to do so would, in effect, be to ask them if they were detestable hypocrites.

To provoke this discussion was in the highest degree rash and imprudent if there was no serious risk at the moment of the national cause being sacrificed; but if there was such a risk, any man of honour may be invited to declare what our duty in the contingency was, for our country was placed upon trial before all men of honour in the world.

At the ensuing meeting* Mr. John Augustus O'Neill was in the chair, and Mr. Holmes's vindication of Irish rights and the collapse of the State prosecution which had just occurred was the subject uppermost in every mind. He was duly instructed, doubtless, in the duties of his office, for he opened the business with a solemn warning. There was nothing more difficult, he said, than to repress feelings of exultation at a certain great speech of a great advocate, but he could not, as chairman, utter a word, or permit any one else to do so, which would mix up the Association with matter unconnected with it. Some of his audience remembered that there had been a time when anything written or spoken anywhere in furtherance of Irish nationality was not considered business unconnected with the Association; but that time had vanished. What was most eagerly awaited on this day,

* June 22nd.

however, was some indication of O'Connell's policy with respect to the Whigs; whether the alarm which disturbed the public mind was well or ill-founded. It was the practice to read O'Connell's letters in committee upstairs, but on this occasion Mr. Ray, to whom a letter was addressed, produced it only at the public meeting. At first sight it seemed reassuring; it declared that the rumour which suggested that the Repeal cause was to be abandoned, postponed, or compromised, was quite unfounded. To silence all unworthy cavilling, he recommended that the pledge signed by himself and others at the Repeal Levée should be read and entered on the minutes. This precaution might take away some clap-traps from "juvenile orators," but it would satisfy every rational Repealer that the cause could not be sacrificed to any party, or postponed for any purpose. In conclusion, he exhorted the Irish people, clergy and laity, to assist him in excluding dissension from the Association, and to continue the unanimity of exertion, which could alone procure the repeal of the odious union.

The speech of the day was made by Mr. Fitzpatrick, a young barrister of great fluency and self-possession, and a good deal of rhetorical power. He thought it necessary to repudiate, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Association, suspicions that they were in danger of being corrupted by the Whigs. The faith of Repealers was pure, and would be abiding under all temptations. But still they might reasonably prefer the men whose conscientious votes discharged the Liberator from prison to those whose judges and juries had sent him there.

Mr. Barry followed with a speech well calculated to restore peace, if peace had been possible; and which, for that purpose,

went to the extreme verge of honourable submission. To answer charges coming from O'Connell, he said, was a task of peculiar difficulty, for his merest whisper was nearly conclusive against any opponent with the people, as it naturally ought to be. If Mr. O'Connell were present, and said, "There are dangerous men among you; Mr. Barry is a dangerous man, and has been pursuing a dangerous line of conduct," he would respectfully invite the leader to specify the acts in which he had been culpable, and if he could not justify himself, he would retire. But, as far as he knew, he had done nothing whatever to excite dissensions. He and his friends might be driven from the Association, and forced to quit public life; but if so, they would strive to gather knowledge that might be valuable to the country thereafter.

Mr. O'Gorman, as one of the "juvenile orators" referred to, was proud to appear before the Association to clear his character from a foul stain. He would not dwell on the discourtesy that had been shown in withholding this letter from the persons attacked till they heard it read that day; honest men did not need time to prepare a defence. It was said they had made efforts to spread dissensions in the Association; but what was the fact? They found stated in the *Mail*, a paper of large circulation, that O'Connell declared he would be content with a real union between England and Ireland. Had O'Connell made such a statement, he would be no fit leader for the Association, no fit leader for the people of Ireland. But they believed the statement to be false, and contradicted it. Was this striving to spread dissension? Was crushing a dangerous lie a clap-trap speech? If the persons designated as "juvenile orators" had indeed spread dissensions, they ought to be hooted from the Association, for dissension was a deadly evil; but if the charge was false, eternal shame upon those who had poisoned the mind of the leader.

Meagher, who was supposed to be incapable of unpremeditated speech, interposed with a prompt and telling reply to Mr. Fitzpatrick. That gentleman, he said, inspired, no doubt, with the zeal of a patriot, denounced difference of opinion, but it was in a tone which provoked fresh differences :—

"He repudiates disunion, but the result is discord. He preaches peace, and preaches it so forcibly that he provokes a war. The attack has been begun—we have been struck, but from our position we will not flinch. The imputations with which we have been insulted, the charges with which we have been aggrieved, we shall meet, and boldly meet. That we suspect the integrity of our leader, we deny. That we have assailed him, let the people decide. You have our assurance that in denouncing the Whigs we designed no attack upon the leader of this Association. Accept that assurance, or reject it, as you may find reason to do. If you believe us to be men of truth, accept it. If you believe us to be false, reject the assurance and denounce our acts. But we have been told that in warning the people against the Whigs, that we implied a corrupt tendency in the people. Sir, we remembered what the Whigs had done in other times, and were prompted by the recollection to warn those whom they deceived before. If to warn be to insult, then do we plead guilty, and we await the penalty."

His peroration foreshadowed a risk to which Barry had alluded. His friends might be excluded from Conciliation Hall, but exclusion would not affect their principles, their sentiment, or their action.

"On the contrary," he said, "there are many things in a popular agitation that tend rather to enervate than strengthen sentiments of a generous nature. There are many things in the depths of a political society that repel, offend, disgust. Removed from these, our hearts are pure, and our minds are free. Beyond these walls we have many incentives to love our country, and to serve her well. Her lofty mountains, her ruins full of a glorious history—her old music—the memories of her soldiers, her statesmen, and her poets—these you cannot deprive us of. So long as we possess these, so long shall Ireland inspire our love and claim our service. This, Sir, is certain, we shall leave this Hall as we entered it—the unpaid servants of our country. We shall leave it with our honour unimpaired, though our influence may be crushed—we shall leave it asserting the right of free opinion, and our determination to defend it; and if, hereafter, you regret the step you may have taken against us, and once more require our aid, though you may have acted towards us as the citizens of Rome once did towards Coriolanus of Corioli, we will not imitate his recreant revenge —we will not go over to the Volsci—but return to your ranks, and fight beneath the flag from which you drove us."

Mitchel addressed himself to the question in a more practical spirit, as it seemed to me, a watchful spectator of the proceedings. He regretted his friends had taken up so warmly Mr. O'Connell's imputation on juvenile orators. Perhaps he wrote in a moment of irritation, and when he next appeared in Conciliation Hall would acknowledge that they deserved no reproaches. For what had they done but what he now did

himself; he proposed that the solemn pledge of the 30th May should be repeated, a pledge that we would never while we lived place reliance on any English faction, but demand as our ultimatum an independent domestic legislature. A statement was attributed to Lord John Russell that there existed a party represented by the *Nation* which urged Ireland to separate herself from the Crown of England, and excited to outrage and violence as means to that end: a charge, in fact, that the persons in question were guilty of high treason, whose punishment is death:—

"Now, Sir, though I am not the editor of the *Nation*, as some newspapers represent, I have the honour to be a contributor to that journal, and to know intimately the gentleman who must be supposed to have been meant; and I say that whoever charges the *Nation*, or those connected with it, that they preach separation from the Crown of England, or have ever done so, no matter who he may be, from Lord John Russell down to the meanest person on earth, he lies. But, Sir, we do demand, though not separation from the Crown, unlimited independence of legislature to the people of Great Britain. We do demand a parliament upon Irish ground, which shall be supreme in all Irish affairs, both foreign and domestic, which shall consist of Irishmen, which shall have only Irish interests to attend to, which shall be guarded by an Irish army and an Irish navy."

Mr. Doheny, who had taken no share in the former debate, observed that he could not have been alluded to in O'Connell's letter, not only because he was absent, but because he was unhappily no longer a juvenile orator; but when danger threatened his friends he came to take his share in it. The doctrine of the pledge reiterated in O'Connell's letter expressed his opinions exactly and all of their opinions, why, then, should their not be an end to dissensions? Repealers should bear and forbear with one another. They wanted to be more united when danger menaced their cause; the Lord John Russell whom Mr. Fitzpatrick eulogised was the same who passed a Coercion Act as oppressive as the one now before Parliament, the head of a party that boasted Repeal would be resisted even to the length of civil war.

Among the "steadfast, moral-force Repealers" of that day Mr. John Reilly was notable. He was a man

of a certain native vigour, for having been bred a tailor he had made himself a barrister; and he possessed that remarkable gift which used to be called mob-oratory in Ireland, the power of talking effective and rhetorical commonplace to the delight of an uneducated audience, and in latter times his pursuit has been to talk it for hire in the interest of candidates for Parliament. O'Connell was accustomed to say that if you put a public meeting in good humour you might do what you pleased with them, and Mr. Reilly had a store of drollery always at command, which tickled the popular ear agreeably. On this occasion he chose the didactic tone where he was less at home. As he found gentlemen acknowledging they were connected with the *Nation*, he had a right, he said, to ask them whether they were identified with sentiments injurious to Ireland, which he found in that journal.

Mr. Barry interposed to deny he was connected with any paper; he had contributed to the *Nation*.

Mr. Mitchel: I avow the connection. I should say this, I am not the editor of the *Nation*—my friend Mr. Duffy is editor and proprietor; my friend Mr. Duffy is, in fact, the *Nation*.

The "sentiment injurious to Ireland" seemed to be a single passage from an article in which I had urged Repealers not to throw away, by dissension, the new strength gained since 1840.* Mr. Reilly enlarged

* The "injurious" passage was in these terms:—"And shall we quarrel with our new strength—with this growing wealth of mind and energy? Once there was little more in the agitation than O'Connell and the multitude, and then surely it was not well with Ireland? For less than a miracle of God would not liberate a people among whom knowledge

on this offence at great length, and summed up with a suggestion that these young gentlemen would probably retire, but he had no doubt the work of the country could go on without them. When he concluded Mr. Mitchel remarked that he did not think it necessary to say a word in reply; an opinion which expressed the general verdict of his comrades. In dismissing the meeting, the chairman declared that after mutual explanations disagreement no longer existed; which was rather an optimist view of the situation. Till O'Connell and Mr. John O'Connell returned to Dublin truces and understandings were purely conditional.

As we are approaching a period when, according to a popular legend, O'Connell's peaceful designs to repeal the Union were interrupted by the physical force projects of certain rash young men, the reader is invited to note Mr. Mitchel's speech. It described the state of opinion as it then existed with perfect accuracy. He was afterwards the leader of the extreme section of the national party, a section which sprang up under circumstances to be hereafter described; but he was at this time as little as any one meditating separation or a republic. Mr. Devin Reilly, who joined Mr. Mitchel in the policy he finally adopted, commented on Lord John Russell's charge in an article in the *Nation*, and his language was equally specific:—

and self-respect, and independence, the capacity to see and the courage to dare, were not common. Never have such a people won freedom; seldom, when freedom was their birthright, have they retained it intact."

"The *Nation* has not," he wrote, "excited to violence, but to continued agitation—it has not looked to disturbance, but to education as its means—it has not advocated Separation as its end, but National [Legislative] Independence. We defy Lord John Russell, or any other man, to point out, from 'the *Nation's* First Number' to this, a single sentence exciting to violence or advocating Separation."*

Such a union as Austria afterwards concluded with Hungary would have satisfied the whole Irish nation; and though the Young Irelanders had not changed their opinion that national independence is worth fighting for, they recognised the manifest fact that O'Connell had made a successful fight impossible during his lifetime.

There is another circumstance which, noted at this point, may help the reader to interpret this tangled story. The eloquent Mr. Fitzpatrick, who answered so confidently for the fidelity of Conciliation Hall, but who, with a determined nationality, united so profound a respect for the Whigs, was appointed to an office in a Crown colony, when that party came into power, and was heard of no more in Irish affairs.

During the critical interval before O'Connell's

* In answer to a suggestion in *Fraser's Magazine* that the "Young Irelanders" were Republicans, Mitchel, at the same period, wrote in complete contradiction:—"Be it known, then, to *Fraser's Magazine*, and all Cockneyland, that those persons are not Republicans; that theories of government have but little interest for them; that the great want and unvarying aim of them all is a national government, no matter what may be its form; that those of them who may be democrats in abstract principle, yet prefer an oligarchy of our own aristocrats to the most popular forms of rule under foreign institutions and foreign governors; that those of them who are aristocratic in feeling are yet ready to say, 'Give us our own democracy to rule over us before the haughtiest peerage of another nation.'"

return, I urged in the *Nation* that discussion had done good; for suppressed opinion is as dangerous as suppressed air, and debate was a safety valve. The attacks on the young men were unjust, but they had read the history of Ireland, and knew the penalties which those who serve her never escape. Grattan was pelted by the mob of the city he had raised to be the opulent and refined capital of a free nation; Curran, the unswerving Emancipator, was for years the common butt of journals preaching Emancipation; the libels on O'Connell by the section of Catholics who differed from his policy were at one time as bitter as the libels on the Young Irelanders to-day; and Davis, while living, was systematically calumniated by writers who now howled a *Caoine* over his grave. But these troubles were never more than temporary, and need discourage no one.

Before the Association again met,* the Peel Government had fallen. Their Coercion Bill was thrown out by a combination of discontented Protectionists stimulated by Mr. Disraeli, and of repentant Whigs led by Lord John Russell. For Lord John, who had countenanced the measure in the first instance, recognised all its demerits when a change of government became probable. Sir Robert Peel, who would not undertake to govern Ireland without coercion, retired, and Lord John was sent for. The proceedings of the Association were opened by reading a letter from O'Connell, describing the opportunities a new Government would have to conciliate the Irish people, and exhorting the

* July 4th. Monday was the ordinary day of meeting.

Association to "discountenance the fomenters of dissension and distraction" in the Repeal ranks. O'Brien was present, and spoke at great length, and with all the unreserve possible without an open rupture. He did not believe in the Whigs or in their promised concessions, but he indicated his dissent with studied courtesy. The course taken with respect to his imprisonment was not, he considered, a judicious one, but he entertained no unkind feelings. He would work with the utmost cordiality with the gentlemen who had counselled it; and he trusted his example would persuade others to pursue a similar course. With respect to the new Government, he would admit that the Whigs were better than the Tories, but they were infinitely more dangerous. They would attempt to undermine the Repeal cause by promises of good measures and good places. If any Repealers were ready to sell their principles for place, they would obtain it, and along with it the eternal malediction and everlasting scorn of their country. If the Government passed good measures, they should be thanked and applauded, but he would not thank them beforehand, he would not allow himself to be deluded by promises which they had no intention, and, he believed, no power, of realising.

He then turned to the question of how Repeal was to be promoted, and sketched a policy which constituted the natural sequel of a parliamentary campaign, such as O'Connell had latterly advocated.

The people should elect Repealers, and only Repealers, men not merely professing that faith, but members of the Associa-

tion, selected to serve, not under Lord John Russell, but under O'Connell. After a general election, they might hold a conference in Conciliation Hall, to determine whether they would best serve Ireland by going to London, or by working at home. If they went to London, it should be as an independent Irish party. A general election might be distant, but the re-election of Irish members who accepted office under the new Government would occur immediately, and he called on the Association and the people to act on their avowed policy by supporting only Repealers. For himself, he said, with great dignity and feeling, that in joining the Association he had relinquished all possibility of office, which otherwise might not be beyond his reach; he had placed himself in antagonism to political friends whom he held in high respect; and, lastly, he had spent twenty-six days in a cellar, acting under the conviction that the Irish people were sincere in their great design, and that neither corruption would induce, nor intimidation deter, them from pursuing it. If they were steadfast, and continued to act wisely and peacefully, they would be cheered by the approbation of good men, and, without irreverence, he would add, of Heaven; and in the end they would raise their country to such a position that the name of the Irish people would never be pronounced without respect and admiration.

Mr. Henry Grattan, who followed, bade them remember that those who sold Ireland of old constituted a terrible example. Some had died in foreign lands, unhonoured and unknown; some lived in a state of imbecility, if not insanity; one had cut his throat. These were the penalties of treason. But the English Government did not succeed in purchasing Swift; Lucas was beyond their price; neither could they buy him who led Ireland to independence and glory. The English papers, which seldom troubled themselves with Repeal proceedings, commented lately on a speech of Mr. Meagher, which displayed the vigour of Junius, the spirit of Burke, with the courage of Flood and Burgh. The defeat of the Peel Government on the Coercion Bill was preceded by another defeat, the failure of their prosecution of the

Nation. If Repealers wanted an example of patriotism, if they wanted a fund of principle, let them go to the immortal speech of Robert Holmes. The man of seventy could animate them by his example and his eloquence, and band together young and old for that measure, without which there could not be peace or prosperity in the country.

Mr. Maurice O'Connell and Captain Broderick spoke on the same occasion, but on bye-issues, keeping clear of the burning question of policy.

When the new Government was formed, it was found that four Irish members had accepted office—Mr. Sheil, Mr. Wyse, Mr. More O'Ferrall, and Sir William Somerville. They occupied seats which the people could control, and which have since been constantly won by Nationalists. Their elections would bring to a practical test the policy the Association was about to pursue, for they furnished the precise opportunity of preferring Repealers to Whigs, which for many months O'Connell had anticipated.

It greatly simplifies the process of unravelling a complicated story to state at the threshold the result which the reader is expected to reach at the close. It is like carrying a torch through a dim and tortuous labyrinth. The vigilance of the reader is awakened, and he scrutinizes the facts submitted to him, in order to judge whether they justify the conclusion they are intended to sustain. Let me state, therefore, distinctly at the outset that O'Connell came to an understanding with the new Government in London, to support them in Parliament, and to secure the re-election of their

colleagues in Ireland, and in return was reinstated in the control of Irish patronage in all its branches, as fully as he had enjoyed it when they were last in office. He immediately set out for Dublin to fulfil his part of the compact. From the speeches of O'Brien, Grattan, and the Young Irelanders it was certain this alliance would be resisted in the Association. That it should not be successfully resisted, it became necessary to silence, or exclude, the men whose opposition was to be feared. For this purpose, and for this purpose alone, a pledge was framed which rent the Association into fragments. It is a bitter and humiliating story to recall, but if history is to be of any service as a warning, if Ireland is not to run round in a circle of identical errors for ever, it is a story which must be unsparingly told. Let it be remembered that the aged tribune was in broken health and spirits, that he was labouring under a mortal disease, and that his favourite son, who had neither brains nor heart for such a task, dictated in a great measure the policy which his father pursued. The desire to regain the control of public patronage was a perilous mistake, but his motive was not the ignoble one which strangers may suppose. He was a great chieftain who loved to confer favours; it was incident to his profuse nature to give largely and to take largely, and the patronage of the country belonged, as he deemed, to him, the undoubted depository of its confidence. And assuredly the pleasure of conferring benefits and rewarding services influenced him more than any sordid purpose. But the fatal

mistake, for which no defence can be offered, is that he denied and repudiated the intention he had formed and the compact he had made.

On the 6th July O'Connell resumed his place in Conciliation Hall, and the meeting was recognised as a turning point in the Repeal movement. He could no longer postpone declaring his intentions, and they were awaited with feverish anxiety. The Hall was crowded to suffocation; the Young Irelanders and Henry Grattan were present, but Smith O'Brien had retired to Cahirmoyle. After more than a quarter of a century, it wrings the heart still to recall that scene, those which speedily followed, and all the fatal consequences they involved. For the Emancipator, the guide and father of his people, was about in his old age to make a wreck, not only of us but of himself, of the cause to which he was pledged, and of the people who loved him so tenderly. He spoke at great length on a variety of subjects, but the long speech led up plainly to one result—the Whigs were to be supported, that they might pass important measures of amelioration. It had been suggested to him that Repealers should suspend the proceedings of the Association, and place confidence in the Ministry. But he would not suspend the proceedings for an hour; on the contrary, he would bring two questions before the House of Commons at the earliest possible moment—first, the Repeal of the Union; second, the bills necessary to establish equality of rights between Great Britain and Ireland. There were eleven measures which he wanted passed in the

present session, but before describing them he would move that the general committee be instructed to obtain candidates, and make arrangements for securing the election of Repealers wherever it was possible. He would not, however, sanction vexatious oppositions, which could not serve the cause.

A voice—one of those anonymous warnings which often interpret the popular will in a critical crisis—cried out, "Dungarvan?"

"Yes," O'Connell continued, "certainly Dungarvan. If they could get a Repealer elected, they would, of course do so. If necessary, he would go himself to Dungarvan for the purpose; but he would not sanction vexatious or bootless opposition."

He concluded with an enumeration of the eleven measures he expected to be immediately passed into law, and which the Government, as he affirmed on a later occasion, had promised to support. None of them related to the pressing emergency of the famine, but they included many useful and practical reforms, such as enlarging and simplifying the franchise, increasing the number of members for Ireland, limiting the power of ejectment, creating county boards in lieu of grand juries, and levying a tax of twenty per cent. on absentees, to be applied to the purposes of these boards. Let Parliament give him the eleven measures in the present session, and the twelfth, Repeal, he would look for in another session. It was a dainty dish to set before the people, eleven sweeping reforms, all to be accomplished in a single session. Small wonder that simple, well-intentioned persons thought relaxing the

Repeal agitation for a little was a cheap price to pay for such abounding blessings. But a people who lay down their arms hope for concessions in vain. That session and many sessions passed, a generation of men have lived and died, and one of the eleven measures never became law: one of them, indeed, was never so much as proposed, either by the Government we were exhorted to support, or even by the eminent member who promised to obtain them. And the Repeal of the Union, which was to be submitted to Parliament at the earliest possible moment, was never mooted by the great Repealer in that assembly any more. *

Whether O'Connell, after twelve years' familiarity with the procedure of the House of Commons, expected that eleven measures could be carried through Parliament in a session which had already reached July, or that one serious measure could so fare, need not be debated. A readiness to believe the impossible, and to accept promises of the sun and moon to be delivered on a future day, is one of the weaknesses of an enthusiastic people; but he sins against his race who subjects them to the scorn of their enemies, by appealing to that sentiment.

The general committee were instructed to consider the vacant seats, Drogheda, Kildare, Sligo, and Dungarvan; but public interest centred on the last.

* While this narrative is being written, one of the proposed measures, the one to establish security of tenure, has been passed, in the session of 1881, six and thirty years after the transactions described in the text, and when O'Connell and O'Brien, Russell and Peel, Meagher and Mitchel, and nearly every one engaged in the contest on either side, have long been carried to their graves.

The policy applicable to the occasion may be said to have been fixed by precedent. The Catholic Association pledged itself to oppose every government which did not make Emancipation a Cabinet question; and it was by opposing an Emancipator who joined the Wellington Government that they brought matters to a crisis. In Dungarvan, according to a Report published by the Association, some months earlier, 104 electors out of 163 were Repealers, and the defeat of Sheil, whom the people loved for old services, would have been a stroke closely resembling the defeat of the Emancipator, Vesey Fitzgerald, at Clare. It was a stroke which, for six months past, O'Connell had constantly and specifically promised. When the question was referred for consideration, the writ had already issued, but the Committee were not called together till four days later. When they met, the nomination was only two days off, in a borough 100 miles from Dublin. The young men thought that a candidate ought immediately to be sent down, with the sanction of the Association, and supported by all its resources. O'Connell feared it would be impossible to find a candidate on so short a notice. There were several candidates present in the room at the moment. His relative, Captain Broderick, was suggested, but he discreetly declined. Mr. John Augustus O'Neill, at a later period, avowed that he was willing and eager to stand if he had been invited. Mr. Daniel O'Connell, junior, a week or

two later, was sent as a candidate to Dundalk, and, it may be presumed, he would equally well have suited Dungarvan. Meagher would have stood had he been acceptable to O'Connell. In short, the pretence of wanting a candidate was idle and absurd. Had it been true, it would be worse than idle and absurd, for to preach a parliamentary policy as the one means of attaining the object the country had in view, without having a single candidate ready to stand when the occasion arose, would be to betray the national cause. The Committee, in the end, adjourned till Saturday, and, when it met, Mr. Sheil was member for Dungarvan.

In the adjourned meeting, O'Connell submitted two documents for immediate consideration. One was a report accounting for the unopposed election of the Whig minister in a Repeal borough, as best the framer could; the other, a series of resolutions, reiterating, as he said, the fundamental policy of the Association. The young men took exception to both documents—to the report, as not being a correct statement of the facts: and to the resolutions, as containing a new and false proposition, to which the Association had never been pledged before. But Old Ireland had rallied in great force, and both were passed triumphantly, and ordered to be laid before the next public meeting. The Young Irelanders did not misunderstand the design of the second report, but they thought they could effectually evade it. Mitchel wrote to one of the party

who was absent that O'Connell distinctly admitted his object was to exclude the young men, but it was an object they were determined to disappoint:—

"I gave him fair warning in Committee that if he brought forward any ethical dogmas about 'physical force,' I would publicly express my dissent, but that I would *not* be driven out of the Association upon any such grounds—that I had come to help to repeal the Union—that I was obedient to all their rules—had no notion of using any other agencies for our purpose than those which the Association recognised—and, in short, would not go."

The Master of the Mint was Member for Dungarvan, and the Committee were about to justify themselves for permitting a walk-over. It was felt universally that the crisis had come. Those who went to Conciliation Hall in the hope of witnessing an exciting conflict were gratified to see the leading Young Irelanders in their places, looking cool and fearless. They were good-looking and spirited, these young men; the manliness of their bearing, and the grace and energy of their appearance, were well calculated to win sympathy. The other party were in great force, having been carefully whipped up. In a letter to Barry, then at Cork, O'Gorman said:—

"O'Connell did his best; he had a meeting on Sunday expressly for the purpose of getting his men to attend the Hall, and help him in crushing us."

O'Brien was absent, and there are angry complaints in the correspondence of the period that he evaded his proper responsibility. But he was not

identified with the Young Irelanders; he held a position in the national party resembling that of umpire; and he wisely desired to avoid, as long as it was possible, a controversy with O'Connell. Considering his proud and upright character, however, it is surprising that he avoided it by absenting himself when an important decision was to be made. He was certainly informed of the real state of affairs; Robert Potter, afterwards Member for Limerick, and the solicitor whom O'Connell had employed to conduct Father Davern's defence, wrote to O'Brien a week before this meeting:—

"I understand Sheil is *not* to be opposed. Clements is to get a valuable appointment, and O'Connor Don is to be a Lord of the Treasury. All the dismissed magistrates are to be restored, and the Government promise O'Connell to pass an extensive Franchise Bill."*

At the opening of the proceedings a letter was read from O'Brien, urging the Association, in pursuance of the policy to which it was pledged, to set up Repeal candidates against the Whig placemen in every instance; but when angry passions are aroused, a letter is but a scrap of soiled paper; and it produced no effect.

O'Connell brought up the report on Dungarvan. It declared that want of time for preparation, the

* The Bishop of Killaloe, a Nationalist of the most moderate school, who had joined the Association only as a Federalist, was of the same opinion. At a later period he wrote to O'Brien:—"The Whigs are to be supported, and that support given to them, in violation of the most solemn engagements, and to the disappointment of the most disinterested advocates of the national cause."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

fact that the election was only for one year, and the apprehension that defeat would be seriously detrimental to the cause at this juncture, had induced the Committee to forego a contest. Next year, however, they would be enabled to return a Repealer in spite of any government. He moved the adoption of the report, which was seconded and put to the meeting.

Mr. Meagher got up with the evident intention of speaking, and there was great excitement.

O'Connell said:—

"You perceive, gentlemen, we will have dissensions enough. I beg of you to keep yourselves cool, and, in order not to give the young gentleman an opportunity of creating dissension, I will not move the resolution at present. The next thing I have to bring before you is the report condemning physical force. [After a divergence to some local question in Cork, he suddenly added] Will you allow me to say I have changed my mind. It would be better to hear Mr. Meagher now. I will therefore move that the report relative to Dungarvan be received."

It was a trying moment for the young orator. He stood face to face with a man of matchless skill in debate and immense personal authority, backed by a popularity as wide as the island—a man he had been trained to love, and whom he had loved devotedly. He was unknown to the people, except through a few speeches delivered in the same hall: he was about to encounter present obloquy and certain misrepresentation—the hisses of the mob and the sarcasms of society, and he had

no support but the promptings of his conscience and the confidence of his associates. He could not but know that not one of his lieutenants had ever encountered O'Connell successfully. Sheil, the greatest of them, O'Gorman Mahon, once the popular ideal of daring and devotion, honest Jack Lawless, sagacious Peter Purcell, and a host of others, from Feargus O'Connor to Marcus Costello, had been laid prostrate before him. To all appearance it was a contest as unequal as that of the Philistine giant and the shepherd boy. On rising, he was well received, and he spoke with moderation, and without the slightest want of respect for the leader. He regretted that Dungarvan had not been contested at all odds and against every risk.

"Had the battle been won, it would have been an inspiriting example; had it been lost, at least the Association would have been rescued from the aspersions of its enemies. But, above all, a contest in Dungarvan would have taught the Whigs that the heart of Ireland was bent on Repeal. The unopposed election of Richard Sheil would, he feared, cast a stain on the records of the Association. He did not urge a factious resistance to the Whigs; the Irish members voted with the Peel Government on the Maynooth Grant and Free Trade, and what he desired was that they should act towards the Whigs exactly as they had acted towards the Tories. If they permitted the Association to assume a Whig aspect, they would shut out Irish Conservatives and Irish Radicals. Some men might desert from their ranks, take place, and violate the national vow——"

Mr. Meagher was interrupted at this point with loud cries to name the persons he suspected. He was not in the least bound to name anybody, as he was

indicating a general danger; but he was only three and twenty, he was totally unaccustomed to the strategies of debate, and he considered it a point of honour to meet the challenge boldly. He replied that he would not have the slightest hesitation in naming a person.

O'Connell: When he displays such a daring as this I call upon him to name.

Mr. Meagher said he was alluding to a report prevalent in the city that a member of the Association, who had taken an active part in its proceedings, Counsellor Clements, had received a government appointment.

Mr. John O'Connell rose to order. After the specimen of conduct the meeting had just seen, attacking an absent gentleman without notice, he did not think there was any terms to be kept with these gentlemen.

O'Connell: Two or three men from the *Nation* office come here to create dissension.*

Mr. John O'Connell bethought him of falling back on the policy his father had indicated, but shrunk from, of applying the purge before the Dungarvan question was considered. He proceeded to say that when the resolutions, which would be presently read—resolutions on which the Association was founded, resolutions of peace, law and order, and repudiating all other agencies —were before the Committee, there were gentlemen present who said they did not unconditionally agree in them. Now, if they did not agree in them, they ceased to be members of the Association.

* It is curious that at this time Meagher was so little a gentleman from the *Nation* office that he had never written a line in the journal, except a copy of verses; O'Gorman neither before nor after was a writer, whereas, O'Connell and Mr. John O'Connell had been repeatedly contributors.

Mr. Mitchel and Mr. O'Gorman interrupted Mr. John O'Connell, to remind him, though he rose to order, that he was quite out of order himself. The question before the chair was not moral force, but the Dungarvan election. The chairman, Mr. Keshen, at that time Lord Mayor of Dublin, however, took no notice of their protest. Mr. John O'Connell persisted in contending that, before they went into the squabble "got up for the miserable purpose of division," they were bound, for the safety of the cause, to find out whether those persons who were fostering division were or were not members of the Association. If they did not submit, unconditionally and unequivocally, to the principles of peaceful agitation and to the utter repudiating of physical force under any circumstance, it was the instant necessity of the case that they should cease to be members. He called on the chairman to have this question decided before any more discussion was permitted. Commenting upon this statement afterwards, a sarcastic critic quoted with great effect the vulgar proverb that Mr. John O'Connell let the cat out of the bag.

When Mr. Meagher was about to resume, after this utterly disorderly interruption, Captain Broderick and Mr. Steele called upon him, in violent and offensive terms, to apologise to Mr. Clements for having insulted him. Mr. Meagher said that, as the report was denied on behalf of Mr. Clements, he regretted and apologised for having named him; but if the statement were true, he would adhere to his denunciation, for any Repealer

taking office under the present Government would be an apostate from the cause.

The Chairman: The O'Connor Don is a Repealer, and yet he has accepted office.

Mr. Meagher: He is not a member of this Association.

O'Connell: He is not the less a Repealer. He voted for Repeal; I don't think his opinions have changed, and yet we have the brand apostate affixed to the highest name in the country. See what men we have to deal with.

Mr. Meagher, in conclusion, followed Mr. John O'Connell into the irregular bye-issue he had raised. He urged that no other means should be adopted in that Association than moral and peaceful means. He would co-operate with the Association on this basis till it succeeded, or till it declared these means were inefficient. But he would not preclude himself in that case from adopting another policy by repudiating it as immoral or inefficient, for great names had sanctioned it, and noble events had tested its efficiency.

The question before the chair was whether the policy of admitting Shiel to a walk-over at Dungarvan ought to be sanctioned, but O'Connell was too skilful a tactician not to follow the distracting side-issues which had been raised.

It was cruel, he said, the conduct of these young gentlemen; who was safe from being branded as an apostate? He himself might be included in the charge. O'Connor Don took place under the new Government, and he was an apostate for that! Was he untrue to his principles or unfaithful to the creed of his ancestors because he had done so? And Edward Clements, he never knew a soul of purer honour or of more sterling worth.

Suppose all that had been said was true, would they call it apostacy for a man who had proved he was an ardent Repealer to accept, without the compromise of any opinion or the abandonment of any principle, a judicial appointment from the Government. As respects Dungarvan, the young gentleman who came down with a ready-made speech in his pocket was present when a committee decided its course, but he said nothing. Was that right? Ireland deserved never to have her nationality restored if she was to have a nation of men of that description. He had laid before the Association eleven measures, every one of which the Whigs had promised to carry into effect. What was the use of a committee if, after a question had been debated a whole day, a man who had been nearly mute in committee should come forward in the Association, in the hope of getting a few cheers by causing dissension. He asked the chairman to put the question to the vote.

Mr. Mitchel got up, but, as party passions were now let loose, he obtained a hearing with some difficulty. He said he had resisted the report in committee as long as he could; when it was carried he admitted he was bound by it, but he was not bound to say he was satisfied with it. He was not satisfied, and he believed the country would not be satisfied.

Mr. O'Gorman was not present at the committee, and would not now speak on the subject, except that it might be supposed he was content with the course adopted. He regretted a Repealer had not been started. He did not express this opinion to create dissension, but because he considered it his duty. With respect to the acceptance of office by Repealers, such a course would turn out very dangerous to the national cause. The question raised by Mr. John O'Connell would have been more fittingly considered when the second report was brought forward; he would say, however, at once that he was not at all an advocate for the use of physical force. He was bound by the rules of the Association, one of which was that its end was to be attained by moral means alone. But he did not acknowledge its

right to bind him to any theory or dogma not connected with the conduct of its own business.

The question was then put, and carried without a division.

O'Connell next submitted the report on moral force. This famous report was a long and dreary document, partly historical, recalling the declarations of principle made by the Association from time to time, partly declamatory, describing the sweetness and validity of moral force; but it was unspeakably wearisome, and would have excited no attention but that it embodied the astounding profession of faith that moral force furnished a sufficient remedy for public wrongs, under all circumstances and in all countries. In the committee Meagher had opposed it warmly; Mitchel had contented himself by reminding them that a universal proposition of this nature was *ultra vires*. When the report was submitted to the public meeting he took the same ground.

He did not mean to oppose the resolution, nor was there the slightest necessity to do so. The Association was a legally organised society, seeking to attain its objects by peaceful means, and no others. Constitutional agitation was its very basis, and nobody who contemplated any other method of bringing about the independence of the country had a right to attend there or to consider himself a fit member. By these means, if boldly, honestly, and steadily carried out, legislative independence, he believed, could be won; and with this conviction he should feel it his duty, if he knew any member who, either in the Hall or out of it, either by speaking or writing, attempted to incite the people to arms or violence as a method of obtaining

their liberty, while that Association existed, to report such member to the committee and move his expulsion. Perhaps it was more necessary, at the present time, to explain clearly the fundamental rules, as the present Prime Minister had recently stated that there was a party in this country who were looking, not merely for national independence but for absolute separation from the British Crown, and who contemplated the employment, not of legal agitation but of outrage and bloodshed. To refute the calumny of the Prime Minister, and of all other enemies, perhaps it was well to lay before the public once more the real state of the case; once more to solemnly disavow all intention of inciting the people to insurrection; once more to declare that all the political and national rights we seek can be attained without shedding a drop of blood; and that Repealers meant so to obtain them. So far as the resolutions purported to embody the rules and constitution of the Association, and so far as they disclaimed on its behalf all intention of resorting to force or arms, he cordially concurred in them.

As for the abstract and universal principle which seemed to be contained in them, that no national or political right ought, at any time, or under any circumstances, or by any people, be sought with armed hand, widely as he dissented from it, he did not think it necessary to raise any question there. It would not be easy to show that such a theoretical abstraction had anything to do with the business the Association had taken in hand, or that the assertion or denial of it would help them in that business. He would content himself, therefore, with saying that he did not approve of the principle. He did not, for instance, abhor the Volunteers of 1782; and the patriots who had liberated America he did not abhor, but honour. The men of 1798 thought liberty worth some blood-letting, and though they failed, it would be hard if one of their sons should not be thought worthy to unite in a peaceful struggle for the independence of his country, unless he proclaimed that he abhorred the memory of his own father.

Mitchel, for peace' sake, went to the verge—and, indeed, crossed the verge—of reasonable concession, for it could scarcely have been his duty to move the expulsion from the Association of a member whom he found speaking or writing sedition elsewhere; but it was not enough.

O'Connell (interrupting him): Now, am I not called on to interfere. What can this man's object be? He purports to be a man of peace, yet he preaches war; he affects to advocate moral and tranquil courses, yet he speaks with a direct tendency to instigate the country to anarchy and violence. There were several good men engaged in the contest of 1798, but the means they adopted weakened Ireland and enabled England to carry the Union. Washington resisted aggression, and, in doing so, won the independence of his country, and this principle he himself was not only prepared to recognise, but to act upon. Were they to be humbugged by a pretended acquiescence and real difference?

Mr. Mitchel continued to say that in all the practical parts of the report he agreed, but he could not agree in the principle that other men who sought political ameliorations by means different from ours were to be condemned.

O'Connell interrupted him again to demand distinctly whether he was opposing the report. It had no reference to the past, but was declaratory of present intentions and future courses. Formerly every change was effected by physical force, but he had inculcated the doctrine that force and violence injure the holiest cause, and that the greatest political advantages are not worth one drop of blood. In 1808 South America threw off the Spanish yoke and became free, and from that time forth every man who got into power got in by a new revolution. In a few years the number of revolutions amounted to three hundred. A sort of Young Ireland party sprung up, who succeeded in creating revolution after revolution. If any man was for peace,

let him say so, but the man who pretended to profess the doctrines of peace and still preached another was betraying the Association and deceiving himself.*

Mr. Mitchel, in conclusion, desired to avow himself obedient to the laws and constitution of the Loyal National Repeal Association. He wished to continue working in it by the peaceful means which they all recognised. He had no intention in the world of going to war himself or inciting any body else to do so. As far as the resolutions had anything to do with the practical working of the society, he applauded and approved of them most heartily. In as far as they conveyed, or seemed to convey a general condemnation of other societies and other people, he altogether dissented from them.

O'Connell spoke again. He had framed the resolutions to draw a marked line between Young and Old Ireland. Members must agree to the resolutions fully and unconditionally, and if he found any man violating them, he would appeal to the Association for his immediate expulsion.

Mr. Meagher contented himself with saying that he opposed the report in committee because of the abstract principle inserted in it, and on the same ground he opposed it in the Association.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was, perhaps, already negotiating the appointment which he subsequently received, lauded Lord John Russell, and condemned the metaphysical distinction which

* At a later period O'Connell cited the Williamite Wars in Ireland as an illustration of the fatal consequences of rejecting a policy of moral force. It is a comfort to think that it was not from the healthy brain of the Irish leader this extravaganza emanated:—"At Limerick, after two successful battles, a treaty was concluded, which was broken immediately. The arbitration of the sword was resorted to, and that arbitration was violated—the treaty was cut to pieces with the sword. Do you think that if that treaty had been the result of public opinion, of persuasion, and of argument, that it could be violated in this way? It could not. But the treaty made by the sword was violated, and a century of persecution, of bloodshed, and of terror followed."—Repeal Association; *Nation*, Nov. 7. Sarsfield, it is true, was not a Repeal Warden or a Head Pacificator, but perhaps he is to be excused, as he knew no more of these strange phenomena than of a railway or an electric telegraph.

accepted moral force resolutions and applauded physical force examples.

Mr. O'Gorman wound up the debate with an imperturbable good humour, remarkable in the midst of so much angry tumult. He considered himself bound by the rules of the Association. It was obvious that the use of physical force in Ireland, and under existing circumstances, was impracticable and absurd. But the phrase abhorrence of physical force occurred in the resolutions, and he felt it his duty to explain how he understood an equivocal expression, and how far he considered the Association committed by its adoption.

O'Connell: He will not be bound by the resolutions; if he will not, he cannot be a member of the Association.

Mr. O'Gorman: I say I am bound by them.

O'Connell: Then you are bound to abhor physical force. The Repeal Association is entirely opposed to the use of such means, and any man who advocates it cannot be amongst us.

The resolutions were seconded by Mr. John Augustus O'Neill, and adopted amidst deafening cheers, Mr. Meagher alone saying no.* O' Connell carried his report, but he had not accomplished the purpose the report was intended to serve. The young men did not retire; on the contrary, they were not greatly disheartened by the result. In a letter, already quoted, Mitchel said:—

"On the whole, therefore, we reckon the proceedings of Monday rather satisfactory. We insisted (O'Gorman, Meagher,

* The *Tablet* attempted to hold the entire party responsible for Meagher's language and policy, and Mitchel, in a letter to that journal (July 20th, 1846), assured the editor that the gentlemen in question spoke and wrote each for himself, and repudiated the practice of treating them as jointly responsible. He re-stated his own opinions in these terms (the italics are in the original):—"In short, I believe the national independence of Ireland can be *certainly* attained by peaceful agitation, if we persist in it honestly and manfully. I do not even, as Mr. Meagher seems to do,

and I) upon making ourselves understood about the 'physical force' humbug, cleared ourselves of the Dungarvan rascality, and were heard by the people rather favourably—much more so than the *Freeman's* report would indicate. The only unfortunate thing was Meagher's mention of Clements' name, and even then I think no great harm was done, because my belief is that Clements *has* got the place. I heard from Doheny yesterday. The poor fellow has broken his arm, and says he will be confined for some time."

O'Gorman's account of the proceedings (in a letter from which I borrowed an extract above) was even more assured:—

"It is all over, and whatever may be the effect produced on you by the report, I can assure you that we thus far succeeded. They were, even at the worst time, divided in their expression of opinion below the bar, and at the end, when I spoke in answer to Fitzpatrick, quite with me. O'Connell fugled them in the most singular style, groaned, wrung his hands, implored by gestures, threatened them with his clenched fist, &c. . . . Meagher made a horrid mistake in letting himself be driven into naming Clements when, from what he said, it was by no means necessary, and he then got so bothered and confused that the meeting became discontented, and, I feared, would scarce hear us any more. On this account I was infernally mild. Duffy says he never saw a man so soft and insinuating. The chairman acted like a thorough ——; turned his face aside when we wanted to speak, took no notice of our calls to order, and actually assaulted a man who took the liberty of expressing his assent to something one of us said. I am off for Limerick by this night's mail. Write to me at once what you, and those

contemplate the possibility of failure in that course. I entertain no thought, either present, future, or paulo-post-future of resorting to violence; and see as plainly as any man that peace is our true *policy*—our only policy—and will be, if we do not wantonly ruin it, our inevitably successful policy."

you have talked to, think of the business. The report can give you or them no notion of the scene of riotous confusion in the Hall. O'Connell, you know, wanted to get us out, and in that, at all events, he certainly failed. He also wanted, I think, to sneak out of the Dungarvan affair, and in that he failed. He also wanted to have us hooted down in the meeting, and in that he failed. And all that amounts, I think, to a triumph for Young Ireland."

If Meagher will be judged to have acted indiscreetly in naming Mr. Clements, some of his friends considered that he showed singular forbearance and self-control in refraining from stating his authority, for the authority was no other than O'Connell himself. He told the committee that Sheil was about to provide for poor Edward Clements, and Meagher either heard him say so, or heard the story from some one who had. These young men, with no training in diplomatic caution, who were like travellers crossing a dangerous ford, where a slight deviation to the right or to the left might precipitate them into an abyss, carried themselves honourably through the danger by frankly stating the truth as far as it was necessary, and courteously refraining from stating truth which was not necessary and would be offensive.*

O'Connell, as we learned later, took it for granted the Young Irelanders would silently retire. As for the *Nation*, it was to be dealt with separately. Its connec-

* It was stated some months later by Mitchel:—"Sitting in his chair in Conciliation Hall, in the hearing of several gentlemen, he (O'Connell) announces what he called the pleasing intelligence that Edward Clements had got, or was promised an appointment, and that it was owing to "the unsolicited kindness of Richard Lalor Sheil."—Mitchel, in the *Nation*, November 21st.

tion with the Association would be peremptorily terminated, and its various offences against the country exposed by such competent authority, that it would speedily lose its hold over the people. But the Young Irelanders no more felt justified in deserting the national cause because the leader had acted ungenerously, than a pious man feels justified in abandoning his religion because one of its ministers had given him just cause of offence.

During these proceedings, John Dillon reached London on his return from Madeira. An observer at a distance can judge better than those on board where a vessel has drifted, and Dillon thought the Association had drifted into a morass, where it was destined to rot and disappear. All that was left to honourable men was to get out of it as speedily as possible. Pigot combated his opinions, and took a more hopeful view of the Association.

"I laugh," he wrote to me at the time, "at the report that O'Connell meant to expel Meagher last Monday. Could you believe it? . . . I really believe it depends on you all if he is not forced to keep up the agitation against the Whigs. This is a further reason against Dillon's notion of leaving the Association to its natural corruption."

In dealing with Sheil, we had all to contend with a feeling of gratitude and affection towards a man whose services to Ireland had been but grudgingly recognised, and who had an intellectual sympathy with the labour in which we were engaged. He had been quite recently my counsel in the Hawarden case, and Dillon's

companion during his winter in the south. A little earlier Dillon wrote from Madeira:—

"Sheil speaks of you in the highest terms. He expressed himself anxious that MacNevin should go into the House of Commons, and said that he had no doubt of his success. He appears to despair of being returned himself next time; and although he says his mind is made up to be thrown overboard with the rest, the thought evidently gives him pain. It is a distressing alternative to be driven from a post which he has earned so well, or to join an association where he will run the daily risk of being denounced to his face as an infidel."

Dillon wished him every sort of prosperity not obtained at the expense of the national cause; but the cause was sacred, and his first work on his return was to write an article, protesting against the abandonment of a Repeal constituency to a member of an anti-Repeal Government, though the new Minister was his personal friend.* He had gone to Mayo to visit his family before the Dungarvan debate, but he watched it anxiously:—

"Mitchel's conduct on Monday last," he wrote to me, "was altogether unexceptionable. Meagher should have insisted more strongly on the distinction between the theoretic and the practical advocacy of physical force. He fell into the very trap which O'Connell laid for him. The latter, I think, felt damnably provoked by Mitchel's coolness and discretion."

O'Brien, as we have seen, laid his views on Dungarvan before the Association in a letter which fell dead on the audience, and he considered he had parried

* *Nation*, July 11th.

the attack directed against the *Nation* by a precaution of the same nature:—

"I told Mr. Ray very plainly," he wrote me, "that if any motion, not affecting equally other newspapers, were made to separate the Association from the *Nation*, in consequence of articles written previous to the 4th July, I should be under the necessity of publicly expressing my dissent, and that it would also lead to a fatal disruption of the elements of which the Association is composed. I also spoke very earnestly to the Archbishop of Tuam on the subject." *

It is a common reproach of O'Brien by unfriendly critics that he was devoured by vanity. O'Connell probably held this opinion, for he sometimes, as we have seen, tendered him the food on which vanity loves to pasture. In truth, he was proud, not vain—proud of his long descent, of his integrity, of his disinterestedness, and a little too anxious, perhaps, that his conduct should be always seen to correspond with these endowments. But he never sought to derive from his rank anything but its obligations, and his standard of a gentleman's duty was more strictly enforced against himself than against any one else. I have never known a man who might be more safely counted on to be fair to enemies, and, what is rarer, to be considerate of friends who had given him ground of offence—a disposition of which vanity is incapable. His character was brought to a sharp test on this occasion, for, in reply to his note, I told him my mind, in terms which would have alienated a vain man for ever—in terms which, indeed, seem to me now unpardonably rude and blunt—

* O'Brien to Duffy, Kilkea, Kilrush, July 9th.

but which produced a very different result on a sensitively honourable one:—

"You will see by the papers of to-day what became of your letter—it was read and put aside without a word of comment. If it kept your character clear with the people, it certainly had no other practical effect. To have saved Dungarvan would have needed your personal presence in the Committee and in the Association. The contest for the honour of the cause and its safety (both being, I think, involved in the question of Dungarvan) was very unequally maintained, when a few young men had to set themselves against all the venality, all the timidity, and all the honest, confiding ignorance of the Association. And most of them have now left town for circuit; so that while you stay in the country, Mr. John O'Connell will give laws to the Association as he did last year. I am afraid—there is reasonable ground to fear—that the strength of the Association will be sapped away. The evil already done is enormous, and if we let every new encroachment towards Whiggery go unresisted, there will in time be nothing worth making a stand for. If you got suitable candidates named *at once* for all the Repeal constituencies, it would be a security against new compromises. And this may be done, if done promptly; if delayed, you may see what we have to apprehend in O'Connell's declaration yesterday that O'Connor Don is not less a Repealer because he has not joined the Association! A time may come when it will be too late to resist Whiggery; but, if so, it will be our own fault for not resisting it when it was ashamed to show its face.

"O'Connell has done nothing against the *Nation*, but he still talks threateningly. If he ruins Repeal it will be no great matter that he ruins the *Nation* too. Whatever his motive for refraining may be, it would not be candid to leave you under the impression that the men likely to be attacked attribute his silence to your remonstrance. One and all, they believe that, having got into this battle in your defence, you left them, when a crisis came, to take care of themselves. Neither they nor I desire to

complain of this, or mean to let it influence our public conduct in the smallest degree; but, since you refer to it, it would be wholly foreign to my nature to say or do anything to mislead you as to our feelings on the subject. Nobody seems disposed to attribute any unworthy motive (of which we would be bad judges in our own case), but we cannot reconcile the transaction to our preconception of the right and politic course.

"Meagher, you will perceive, was attacked for stating that Mr. Clements had taken a place; the authority for the story was no other than Mr. O'Connell, who told it in the Committee, and stated that Sheil had procured it. I tell you this that you may not misconceive Meagher's conduct." *

One of O'Brien's country neighbours, Samuel Henry Bindon, warned him of the disastrous influence of Sheil's election amongst certain of the gentry. Mr. Bindon was a barrister of Conservative connections; his grandfather had been member for Ennis in the Irish parliament, and his father was a country gentleman who owned a moderate property till the terrible Encumbered Estates' Court came a little later, with the multiplication table in hand, to demand an audit of his ways and means. Bindon sympathised with the national party, worked in literary and antiquarian undertakings with the Young Irelanders, and he had been a frequent correspondent of the *Nation*. His

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence: Duffy to O'Brien. I am of opinion now, with all the facts in view, that though our support of O'Brien, in his contest with the House of Commons, enraged O'Connell, there would have been a conflict whether that incident had occurred or not. The contrary opinion prevailed generally at the time, however. A month earlier, Barry wrote to O'Brien:—"Whatever may be the ostensible reason for attacking the *Nation* (as attacked it will be, I am certain), the real ground for assailing it will be the position it assumed with respect to you in your late controversy with the House."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence: Barry to O'Brien, June 15th.

mind was fertile in projects, and few knew better what was going on in that close corporation called good society. Immediately after the election he wrote to O'Brien :—

"I never remember seeing anything equal to the unmitigated contempt with which the Dungarvan election is regarded. Conservatives, who are anxiously watching the growth of nationality, are quite disspirited, and are loud in their denunciation of this last job. . . Many Conservatives were beginning to regard Repeal as a reality, and not a sham, and in time would have been found in Conciliation Hall. I have spoken to many, and they are more distant than ever." *

A few days after the debate on the Dungarvan election, O'Brien attended a soirée at Kilrush, in the County Clare, and spoke of that transaction with as much frankness as consideration for O'Connell would permit. He deeply deplored that the electors of Dungarvan had sacrificed the independence of that borough for some motive which he could imperfectly understand :—

"I believe," he said, "that for Repeal at the present moment the influence of that election would not have been less than that of great Clare in 1828. The election of Dungarvan has told the public men of this country that if they wished to gain the favour of the Irish people, they must lend themselves to Lord John, or Lord George, or Sir Robert, and by so doing, they will not only receive honour and social station in England, but that they will be rewarded by a manifestation of confidence from the people of Ireland."

He described the temper in which the movement had formerly been conducted, in complete independence

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence : Bindon to O'Brien.

of English parties, and predicted that Ministers would conspire in vain to corrupt or quell this spirit.

Of the Peace Resolutions * (as the second document submitted to the Association by O'Connell came to be called) he said nothing, but Mr. Charles O'Connell, a relative of the Darrynane family, who did not know the wisdom of letting well enough alone, made silence impossible. This gentleman expressed his regret that a party had lately shown itself in Conciliation Hall, who were plainly looking for place, and who thwarted the Liberator on all occasions in his moral force policy.

"Why," he demanded in a fine burst of moral indignation, "is it that young and beardless boys like them should run counter to O'Connell and Smith O'Brien, if it were not with a view to knock up the Association, and to get places and emoluments for themselves? But they have no chance from the present Government."

Had O'Brien listened to this tirade in silence, he would naturally be assumed to coincide with it, and this was an indignity he could not endure. He rose again, and addressed himself directly to the perilous subject:—

"He considered it no less than common justice to say of those gentlemen to whom allusion was made, that they were the very last men, in his opinion, that would look for place or betray the cause of Ireland. He meant Mr. Meagher, Mr. O'Gorman,

* The document known as the Peace Resolutions did not at all consist of resolutions, but was an elaborate report of the General Committee, which would occupy half a dozen pages of this book. It recounts the history of the Association from its foundation, and recites various documents, which it had issued from time to time, declaring its peaceful character and purpose. It will be found in the *Nation*, July 18th, 1846.

Mr. Mitchel, Mr. Duffy, and others. He could not avoid speaking of a gentleman who was an ornament to Ireland, and who was now no more—he meant Thomas Davis. He did not think it necessary that Mr. O'Connell should be defended by aspersing others without cause. As regarded the controversy, he agreed with Mr. Meagher, who declared that for the practical purposes of the Repeal agitation he was fully convinced of the propriety of having recourse to none other than peaceful and constitutional means; but he could not subscribe to the doctrine, nor could he consent to continue a member of the Association if such were rendered an indispensable qualification, that no phase of circumstances, no contingency could occur in a national history or in a nation's struggle for liberty in which a resort to physical force was justifiable. He also thought with Mr. Meagher that it was exceedingly unfortunate that Dungarvan was not contested by a Repealer. Even defeat in an ardent struggle would be preferable to aquiescence in permitting a non-Repealer's return. There was no man in the country who contemplated a resort to physical force with more aversion that he did; but he could not subscribe to the doctrine that there were no circumstances of a nation in which an appeal to the sword may not arise."

A young priest—a tall, pale, scholarly man, who spoke with the *aplomb* of one expressing well-weighed convictions, declared that the use of physical force to obtain national rights was, on the face of it, an open question. To say that no force but moral force should ever be employed was fanatical, and to thrust the doctrine down the throats of her Majesty's lieges was, in his opinion, monstrous folly. Mr. O'Connell's theory was a beautiful vision, but he would never resign his right to hold the opposite doctrine, sanctioned by wise men, noble men, and sainted men, and harmonising

better with the condition of human nature and the apparent ordinations of Providence. This was the same priest whom Mr. John O'Connell had induced to remain a dumb spectator of the Education debate in Conciliation Hall, but who now broke silence to some purpose, and, once for all, Fr. Kenyon, of Templederry.*

The secession, which rent the Repeal party in two, was now at hand. Before describing it, it will be proper to consider more closely the ostensible and the occult points of difference which brought it about. Was O'Connell's moral force theory a true and just proposition, which ought to have been accepted unreservedly? Was it possible to accept it at all without dishonour? And was his alliance with the Whigs a wise and beneficent policy, which it was improper to thwart?

It may seem a waste of time and an insult to

* "Young Ireland," p. 712.—To my letter printed above, O'Brien replied: "With reference to the *Nation* party, I can truly say that I honour their motives, admire their abilities, feel obliged to them for their personal kindness, and am resolved to do all in my power to uphold them: but I am not prepared to identify myself with every opinion expressed by them, nor can I conceive any proceeding on my part more injurious to the cause of Repeal than that I should associate myself exclusively with any particular section of Repealers. The chief value of my present position is that I am enabled to co-operate with the various classes of Repealers, and to assist in keeping the machinery of the movement, which is but too much disjointed, from absolute disruption." (Kilkee, July 16.)

After his Kilrush speech I wrote to him:—"Your speech at Kilrush was most generous and decided. If you will let the past be forgotten, we will heartily say 'Amen' to that resolution. No man of us, trust me, desired to implicate you in our, or any other, peculiar opinions. We felt the value of your neutral position. The future is difficult and doubtful enough, without adding any new jealousy to all already sown, and I, and all the friends I have seen, can and do freely say that any feelings of annoyance that existed for a minute have totally disappeared."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

common sense to debate the proposition whether any political amelioration is worth one drop of blood; but on this controversy the fortunes of Ireland were made to hang. It was this amazing thesis which broke the organised force of the nation into conflicting factions, and rendered any effective resistance to the destruction of the people by famine impossible. The condition of Ireland in 1847-8, the tameness with which strong men endured death by starvation, the pitiful failure of the appeal to arms, all which it concerns the people to know of this cardinal chapter in their history, must for ever remain a maze without a plan, unless this preliminary story be understood and taken into account. For a quarter of a century, indeed, after its expositor lay in his grave, the bitterness which this hypothesis generated was a disturbing element in Irish affairs. It is proper and respectful, therefore, to examine it on its merits.

Taken literally, the proposition is mere nonsense; but interpreted liberally, as meaning that men buy freedom too dearly by blood shed in battle, it contradicts the whole volume of human experience. The exact reverse of the proposition is strictly true, for it was at this price liberty had been bought wherever it existed on the face of the earth. Alike in England and in France, in Switzerland and in Belgium, and in the great asylum of the wronged beyond the Atlantic. The proposition denied in effect that the Protestants of the Netherlands were justified in avenging the butcheries of Alva, or the Catholics of Ireland in resisting the butcheries of

Cromwell. It impliedly condemned the revolution which cut short the duplicities of Charles I., and the revolution which drove out his son and made way for the House of Hanover; the civil war which transformed the oppressed colonies of North America into a free republic, and the civil war which changed the absolute sovereignty of France into a limited and constitutional monarchy. Whatever institutions render life secure and dignified had been won by acting on the contrary doctrine that life is not too high a price to pay for liberty.

But its bearing on past transactions was the least part of its absurdity. There was not at that time one country in the civilised world, outside the British dominions, having serious wrongs to redress, where it was morally possible to apply the remedy declared to be universally and exclusively sufficient. Moral force means opinion formulated in speeches, newspapers, and public meetings; but throughout the whole of Europe public meetings, free speech and free criticism, were prohibited by law. It is not necessary to consider how the principle would have worked at that time in Warsaw, Venice, or Pesth; for beyond controversy, the organiser of a Repeal rent would be sent to Siberia, or buried in the sunless dungeons that lie beyond the Bridge of Sighs, and the convener of a monster meeting hanged or guillotined. It is not necessary to take these extreme cases, because the effectual employment of moral force was impossible in the most civilised capitals of Europe—in Paris, Vienna, or Berlin.

It is a curious fact that, far as the proposition was from being true, it had equally little claim to be regarded as new. O'Connell has bequeathed few maxims to his nation, and with respect to this one he is only responsible for giving it an inordinate extension. Rousseau was its author; he declares that the justest revolution would be bought too dearly by the blood of a single citizen; and whether he meant blood unjustly shed, or blood shed in civil war, we know how ill the Revolution which he helped to create adjusts itself to his theory. Balzac places the sentiment in the mouth of a sensualist, who thought that any human gain would be bought at too high a price by a single drop of his own precious blood. "*Il n'y a pas de science ou de vertu qui vaille une goutte de sang.*" Victor Hugo has used it in a sense which every honourable man will echo: "*Je ne tuerai pas un enfant pour sauver un peuple.*" He would not murder a child to save a nation, but he fought behind the barricades set up against Louis Napoleon.

There was a certain length which educated men, outside the Repeal party, were ready and eager to go with O'Connell's theory. Some of them held that it was not permissible to contemplate the employment of force in the contest with England under any circumstances, as Ireland would necessarily be over-matched. Some held that in States where Parliamentary Government exists, the oppressed are bound to wait the growth of opinion, however slow and wearisome, and never to anticipate it by recourse to arms. But these men, as little as the Young Irelanders, would consent to affirm a universal

proposition condemning the employment of force in countries where opinion counted for nothing.

The principle was not only new in the politics of the world, but new in Irish politics. Independence was granted in 1782 solely to escape a war for Separation. The Duke of Wellington yielded Catholic emancipation to evade an insurrection, in which he believed the gentry and the Established Church would be destroyed; if the Catholic Association had passed Peace Resolutions, and the Duke had put faith in them, he clearly would not have yielded, for the motive to yield would have disappeared. It was not the policy of the monster meetings and the Malow defiance; on the contrary, it was discovered that O'Connell in that era had given the principle, in his "Repeal Catechism,"* a shape in which Frederick or Napoleon might accept it—a determination not to shed "one drop of needless blood." As respects the future, if England ever came to take for granted that Ireland never would approach her with any other weapon than a petition, it might be feared that future Dukes of Wellington would not be too forward to make concessions.

The policy of O'Connell had undoubtedly been constitutional, and he ostentatiously rejected insurrection as one of its agencies; but it would have been ill-described as a policy which had not spilled one drop of blood. An army of humble peasants who voted against oppressive landlords were killed by extermination, as effectually as if they had been sabred in battle; and since the people

* Published in the early numbers of the *Nation*.

had begun to lose faith in the Association, during little more than twelve months, more men were hanged or shot in the agrarian struggle, on both sides, than fell in the Belgian revolution. A greater calamity was in store, though no one clearly foresaw it at the moment: the leader's proclamation that the people would endure all extremity of wrong and suffering without resistance pampered the Government into a contemptuous indifference of the dangers that menaced them; and in the ensuing three years a larger portion of the Irish race was starved to death, in a land which was a granary of corn, than any civilised country lost in war from the rise of Cæsar to the fall of Napoleon. There are men and sects who hold that it is unlawful to shed blood in war, but it is impossible to believe that O'Connell held that doctrine. He had offered to raise 40,000 men to restore the Bourbons, and proffered Irish hands without limit to pull down the American eagle; results which could scarcely be accomplished in consonance with the doctrine in question.

They were required to accept this proposition in relation to the past, but still more emphatically in relation to the future, when we were assured it would spread over the earth like a dawning day. Since that time the whole face of Europe has been changed. Great States have grown up, great States have declined; a kingdom of the first-class has become a republic, a kingdom of the second-class has become the most powerful empire in the world, a kingdom of the third or fourth class has expanded into one of the great Powers

of Europe, an ancient empire has only preserved its existence by concessions to rebels who defied its authority, and has been stripped of its chief provinces by a confederation of Europe, as deliberately as men pluck away one by one the leaves of an artichoke; and in these changes the new ethical principle, destined to control the world thenceforth and for ever, counted for as little as Mormonism or homœopathy. Irish politics have often been marked by a fault, which Burke reproves, of making what he names with singular felicity "the extreme medicine of the constitution" its daily bread; but the opposite fault was even more fatal, of renouncing the use of the saving medicine in any extremity. Insurrection, not provoked by intolerable wrong, and not sanctioned by a well-grounded probability of success, is wicked and foolish; but it remains for ever true, in the language of a philosophical historian, that it is "the blessed resource of the oppressed, without which tyranny would reign supreme on the earth."*

But if the Peace Resolutions, instead of an authentic exposition of principle, be regarded as a device for purging the Association, as Colonel Pride purged the Long Parliament, it must be confessed they answered their purpose completely. It would have answered the same purpose equally well, however, and with less disastrous consequences, to have required educated men to renounce the Copernican system, or reject the law of gravitation. There have been persons found in Ireland to contend that the Young Irelanders ought to have

* James Mill's History of India.

evaded the difficulty by silently agreeing to what O'Connell proposed. They might, indeed, have evaded the difficulty by that method; at no higher price than the loss of their self-respect, and the complete destruction of their usefulness. The *Nation* had constantly taught that integrity is an important factor in public affairs; that the personal independence of the citizen must precede national independence; and had obtained a new audience for the case of Ireland in France, Italy, America, and even in England, in the name of these opinions. If they had paltered with truth for a personal convenience, the conscience of the best men in the Association, and of the generation arriving at manhood throughout the island, would have received a fatal wound, and with all men of honour at home and abroad the essential condition of confidence would have been for ever destroyed. What hope would have remained for the Irish cause if opinion had hid its head in a panic? for opinion was the very soul which was to enter into and reanimate the prostrate form of Ireland. If O'Connell had succeeded in persuading, or compelling, them to affirm the incredible fiction embodied in the Peace Resolutions, such an example of bad faith would have been a calamity to his race, which it may be doubted if all his public services would have counterbalanced. But, in truth, O'Connell did not want or expect them to accept the Peace Resolutions. He wanted them to secede, and leave him to pursue his new policy in peace.

As respects this new policy—his compact with the

Whigs—we can all see now that it was not a wise or beneficent proceeding. Putting out of account for the moment its surrender of the national cause, it was not the best method of obtaining concessions or accomplishing reforms. Before retiring from office, Peel renewed his declaration that there ought to be complete equality of civil and political rights between Great Britain and Ireland, so that no one should be at liberty to say a different rule existed in the two countries. In public employments, he was of opinion that the favour of the Crown should be bestowed without reference to religious distinctions. He admitted that the tenure of land, and the relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland, required immediate consideration, and he had broken completely with Protestant ascendancy. He rebuked the bigots in Parliament, by reminding them in language which O'Connell might echo, that when England wanted a station in the Mediterranean she undertook to support the Catholic religion in Malta in order to obtain it; that when she wanted Canada she embodied a similar condition in the capitulation of that province; and that if she wanted Ireland, she could not afford to adopt a more rigorous Puritanism in that country. He was a man to whom Liberal opinions came tardily, but when they came they were incorporated with his scheme of life, and it was his practice to act on his convictions. To displace such a statesman to make way for a politician without insight or purpose, without the natural heat and masculine force which sway men, or the geniality which sometimes gets a Minister adopted by his

party as a passion, was a fatal mistake. An administration without a leader born to lead has commonly as many heads as the Reeks of Killarney, and produces only feeble expedients and conflicting counsels. And after a little, it became plain that the narrow and acrid nature of the Whig leader chafed under an alliance with which he could not dispense. He relinquished the patronage of Ireland to O'Connell, but he seemed to compensate himself by making no concession to Irish feeling, and making no promise which would compromise him with Englishmen. There were certain measures to which the party he led might be considered pledged. In 1843 the foremost Irish Whigs in the House of Commons addressed the English people, complaining that Ireland was inordinately overtaxed, that she was defrauded of her just share of the public establishments, and that the Departments of State in Ireland were in the hands of Englishmen and Scotchmen. Some of these Irish Whigs were now in office. A manifesto of the English Whigs appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, and in this article, of which Lord John Russell corrected the proof sheets, it was proposed that the Imperial Parliament should meet in Dublin once in three years. But these were concessions offered to a resolute and united people; nothing was heard of them any longer. The reforms embodied in the eleven measures, on which O'Connell had staked his position in Ireland, were not so much as mentioned. But there was something more urgent than modification of the parliamentary or municipal system. Ireland was in the first

throes of a famine which in the end killed or banished one out of every three of her population—which left wide districts as bare of men, and the living things which thrive where men thrive, as the great desert, which, in its dregs, generated new and horrible diseases, and throughout entire counties of the West degraded the remnants of a pious and generous race into the semblance of yahoos. The Minister in whom the people were bade to trust would at least, it might be hoped, face this calamity with the determination to reduce the disaster to a minimum. It is certain that Pitt or Peel, Fox or even Canning, would have taken advantage of the friendly disposition of the popular leader to convince Ireland, by decisive aid and large concessions, that the Imperial system was a safer reliance than a local Parliament. It may be assumed that a generous confederate would have desired to make some attempt to realise one or two of the promises by which the Irish leader carried the Ministerial elections. But none of these things happened. As soon as the elections were over, the policy of the new Administration was specified in the House of Commons:—

"We consider," said Lord John Russell, "that the social grievances of Ireland are those which are most prominent, and to which it is most likely to be in our power to afford, not a complete and immediate remedy, but some remedy, some kind of improvement, so that some kind of hope may be entertained that ten or twelve years hence the country will, by the measures we undertake, be in a far better state with respect to the frightful destitution and misery which now prevails in that country. We have that practical object in view."

This was the upshot of the Whig alliance, and it tests its policy sufficiently. In the days of his strength and courage, so paltry a substitute for his prodigious promises would probably have alienated O'Connell on the instant. But as it was, he went on applauding their intentions, voting for their measures, and distributing the degrading alms of their patronage.*

* My personal conviction was that the intention of allying himself anew with the Whigs arose in O'Connell's mind after the State Trial and imprisonment. The "Memoirs of Lord Campbell"—the same who was made Lord Chancellor of Ireland for a few weeks by the displacement of Plunket ("Young Ireland," Vol. I., p. 58), and who finally became Lord Chancellor of England—have, however, been published since the first part of this work. One may read in that book a letter written by O'Connell, on the 16th September, 1843, in the high-tide of the monster meetings, a fortnight before Mullaghmast, three weeks before the Clontarf meeting was suppressed, in which he invites the Whig leader to conciliate Ireland by certain concessions, and thereby secure the return of his party to power:—"Why does not Lord John treat us to a magniloquent epistle declaratory of his determination to abate the Church nuisance in Ireland, to augment our popular franchise, to vivify our new Corporations, to mitigate the Statute law as between landlord and tenant, to strike off a few more rotten boroughs in England, and to give the representatives to our great counties? in short, why does he not prove himself a high-minded, high-gifted statesman, capable of leading his friends into all the advantages to be derived from conciliating the Irish nation, and strengthening the British Empire?"—"Life of Lord Campbell," Vol. II., p. 180.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECESSION.

THE Young Irelanders did not wish to quit the Association, because to quit the Association meant to commit the public cause to Mr. John O'Connell and speedy ruin. They desired to keep the organisation strong, because it was the instrument by which they hoped to win the independence of the country. And it was plain, beyond all reasonable possibility of a doubt, that, if they retired, the national question would be gradually abandoned, and the leader's green cap made over to Lord John Russell. There might still be an occasional hurrah for Repeal; but Repeal was not a result to be attained by the most persuasive hurrahing, and no other expedient was any longer proposed. It has been imputed to them that what they wanted was to succeed to the authority of O'Connell. Such a desire would have been folly. The authority of O'Connell was purely personal, and could not be transferred to them, or to any one—not even to his favourite son, by his own most strenuous exertions. It was in truth a force which had served its purpose, and was destined to die out, and be succeeded by other forces more in harmony with new conditions and a new generation. But they earnestly desired to avoid a public split. Even the traditional

authority of the place counted for something, and was not to be lightly relinquished.* And a victory or defeat in a temporary contest was little to them, only entering on life, and who hoped to taste the divine joy of liberating their country. To do their duty with the least possible friction was their constant aim. Their subsequent career furnishes sufficient evidence that they did not shrink from sacrifice when duty was in question; and I am persuaded they maintained their convictions in Conciliation Hall, under a more painful responsibility than they afterwards maintained them in the dock of Green Street, or Clonmel. They were ready, and no doubt they were bound, to bear in silence much which they did not approve of; but among the sacrifices which a man is called upon to make for a public cause, his own veracity and self-respect are not included. In sheltering the seed of the future, it was not merely the external show of union which it was needful to preserve, but still more the confidence and sympathy which constitute its vital sap.

In the number of the *Nation* following the Peace Resolutions there was not a murmur against O'Connell or the Association. And the reader will note that later, in more trying circumstances, the same self-restraint was maintained. In the party conflicts which marked the decline of the last century in England, Junius and

* One of the ordinary staff used to boast that, with a chairman and a reporter in the Corn Exchange, he could move all Ireland. During a period when meetings were suppressed (under a temporary Act), a newspaper hit upon the device of reporting an imaginary Association meeting in the accustomed place, with speeches attributed to O'Connell and other popular men, on the topics of the day, and they were eagerly read.

Chatham assailed George III. with ferocious bitterness; but Burke kept the king's name out of a controversy where the king's policy was the subject of his searching criticism. This was the course we took with respect to O'Connell; partly from old feelings of attachment, but more, perhaps, from the fear that the people would cease to believe in anything, if they ceased to believe in the idol of two generations. In an article on the recent debate, which it is necessary to quote, as it became a ground of conflict, I took occasion to enlarge on the view opened up by my friends. There was no necessity for Peace Resolutions, I insisted, because there was not at that time any hope, or aim, of employing physical force, from which the current of events had carried us far away. To make the admission more significant, I contrasted it with the different hopes and aims which existed before the Clontarf meeting.

In 1843 the Irish people rose at the trumpet-call of nationality, and these battalions of fighting men, disciplined and marshalled, with banners and music, and swayed by their leaders like an ordered army, looked the legitimate successors of the Volunteers:—

"France," I continued, "sent them offers of help and guidance through M. Ledru-Rollin, and through many a surer source. America talked openly of Baltimore clippers, and raids over the Canadian border. The journals of Europe speculated on the day an Irish revolution would commence, and Continental statesmen spoke more practically, in stringent tariffs and prohibitory regulations directed against English commerce, what they thought of the matter. To the eyes of the Irish millions who knelt by the Croppies' grave with brothers' love, and sung

the fierce songs of the era by their hearths, and on the hill sides, and at their wakes and fairs and merry meetings, there was clearly discernible in all these sudden and tremendous assemblies an intense under-purpose, which filled their souls with vague, passionate expectation. What it meant to the majority of them needs no oracle."

I admitted that this sentiment had been shared, and fostered, by the writers of the *Nation* :—

"We fully confess that much was written in this journal tending to that end, calculated to stimulate the hope and desire of great and speedy changes wrought by a people's might; but not one whit beyond what was spoken by the orators of the movement at Mullaghmast dinners, and in Lismore declarations, and Mallow defiances. And then, or since, or before, there was never a line tending to excite the people to outrage, or insubordination—not one line. We taught them to be orderly and obedient, as prime duties of their task; for there is nothing so unlike an army as a mob. We sought to plant among a people, in whom long slavery, bitter and degrading oppression, poverty and ignorance, had deadened their instincts of freedom, a knowledge of all the rights and resources of a nation, to the end that they might be used, if great emergencies demanded their use. But our voice was for ever raised against crime, or violence, or breach of neighbourly peace, or social order. This was the era of the monster meetings, the musters, and the marches; when the People's Courts were sitting, and the Council of Three Hundred in immediate prospect."

I described the gloomy change in the national prospects which followed Clontarf; a change deepened by sectarian controversies in the Association, and by insults to France and America.

"From that hour, the tone of this journal on the *means* of liberation altered. We promised speedy and sweeping success

no more. The men conducting it, saw that there was now but one mode left—a slow, deliberate one—and throwing away their former policy like weapons that had become useless, they turned with all their energy to create a new moral force in the country. Education and Conciliation were their means. The Repeal Reading Rooms, The Library of Ireland, many reports of the Association, many volumes of national literature, were fruits of the new policy."

At the era of the State trial, when there was a risk of the people being stung to madness, extraordinary exhortations to peace and forbearance might, I admitted, be well-timed.

"But that danger is gone by, and a new one has arisen. The danger is now from treachery and corruption. Nobody, we venture to say, on the face of the earth, thinks that the Irish people are preparing to take arms in their hands to overturn the Whig Ministry. Any protestations on that score might be spared. But resolutions against Repealers taking place and ceasing to be Repealers, against the return of any but Repeal candidates, under any circumstances, these would have been pertinent to our condition. It is the side from which danger is threatened that men ought to guard; not the side where danger is impossible."

As we must rely on moral force, the greater, I insisted, was the need that our policy should have an intelligible and practical method, and that it should not wantonly undo one year what it had strenuously striven to accomplish the year before:—

"Here, where all men agree we have no resource but moral force, it is our first duty to see that there *is* a moral force created and nourished among us. That it may grow and flourish, it demands culture and guidance. Order is essential to it. To

war, marshalled armies, stored arsenals, mapped campaigns, are not more necessary than a large, distinct, and liberal policy to moral progress. Without that beacon, men run hither and thither; doing, and undoing; throwing down to-day what was built up with care and pains only yesterday; outraging friends won by labour and sacrifices, belying principles which lie at the foundation of our hopes; laying waste the labour of years by some escapade of ignorance, intolerance, or vanity."

In this article, it will be noted, I made the same concession respecting the policy and hopes of the national party, which my friends had made in Conciliation Hall; but it was made equally in vain. It was not concessions that were wanted, but some plausible ground of quarrel. O'Connell and his sons were in London, but Captain Broderick, and the faithful Head Pacificator, at the next meeting in Conciliation Hall, dwelt on the awful admission of the *Nation*, that the people who had assisted at Mullaghmast musters and Mallow defiances in 1843, actually contemplated physical force, as a possible resource. Captain Broderick, who was placed in the chair, made several speeches. He was disgusted at the opposition to a principle destined, eventually, to spread peace over the whole world—the great principle of moral force. He had the utmost confidence in the good intentions of Ministers, and he was in consternation at a statement which he attributed to me, that "the writers of the *Nation*" had received promises of support from France and America in 1843. What I wrote was, that such offers were made to the people of Ireland—which was notorious—but the gallant Captain did not stand on trifles. The Head Pacificator, who

was "watching with lynx-eyed vigilance over the safety of the Association in O'Connell's absence," echoed this alarm, and Mr. Fitzpatrick, who had not yet got his new appointment, naturally shared his fears. Other henchmen fell foul of O'Brien and Father Kenyon for their speeches at Kilrush; but there was no complaint of the speech of Mr. Charles O'Connell, describing the Young Irelanders as place-beggars. On the contrary, letters were read from certain Repeal wardens, censuring the disturbers who had so unwarrantably introduced dissensions into the Hall. Mitchel and Meagher merely remarked that though these letters had not been submitted to the Committee according to practice, they would make no complaint. What they desired was to see the Association apply itself to the business of the Irish people, and leave other nations to attend to theirs. The Head Pacificator solemnly warned them that there could be no business transacted till it was clearly ascertained that the policy on which O'Connell founded the Association was universally admitted. It was notorious that the Pacificator, while he believed in anything, believed in the principles of Locke and the practices of Washington; but it was his melancholy fate to be the hired servant of an Association which suddenly found it necessary to treat these principles and practices as an abomination.*

* "The poor old Pacificator, who used to seem to me a sort of unhappy, misplaced Quixote, in the service of a sublime Sancho Panza, has become as *rusé* and shifty, and as indifferent to truth, as the Governor of Barataria. Alas! poor old faded, forlorn agitator, fortune has not been kind to him."—Private letter, *penes me.*

The *Pilot*, which for a time had been rather disavowed, now rushed to the front, confident of sympathy and support. But, as in the case of the Primate, it rather overdid its part. Mr. Charles O'Connell suggested that the Young Irelanders wanted places—that probably being the motive most intelligible to him. Mr. Barrett could affirm that some of them were already sold to the Government which his patrons were supporting in office. He described the recent speakers at the Association as attachés of the *Nation*, and then made a specific statement of the gravest character; worse indeed than the imputation of insanity, for it was an imputation of sordid treason.

"When our readers are told that men have always boasted to be of this party, men who during the State trials were in communication with Mr. Kemmis and the Attorney-General, are now writing books in which the cause of our country is stabbed through the side of O'Connell, they will find it difficult to disassociate the most deserving of those young gentlemen from the would-be political traitor and literary assassin."

Fortunately, some of the offensive passages were quoted, which identified the books past evasion or denial. I had treated with silent scorn various pleasant inventions of the *Pilot*, but so specific a statement as this needed a specific answer. I wrote a letter in my own name, addressed to the journal, making the charge. The books quoted were, I said, a base imitation and piracy of the Library of Ireland;* no one connected

* They were called the National Library of Ireland, and were published by Mr. McCormick, Christ Church Place, Dublin. This *quasi* national literature illustrates a saying of Sir Arthur Helps that no good

with the *Nation* or the Young Ireland party had ever contributed a line to any one of them, except what was stolen from their writings without their authority. This serial was not sanctioned or recommended by the *Nation;* but among the testimonials of the Press quoted in its favour, that of the *Pilot* held a conspicuous place. The person pointed at as having been in communication with Mr. Kemmis and the Attorney-General during the State prosecutions, was known to me by public repute, and was understood to be editor of the serial in question. He never was connected in any manner with the *Nation* or the Young Ireland party; but he was an habitual writer in the *Pilot,* both before and after his communication with the Attorney-General, and probably up to that moment! It had been twice stated in the *Pilot* in connection with this revelation, that certain persons, who advocated mixed education in the *Nation,* had applied for professorships and other employment in the new colleges. I undertook, if it could be shown that this statement was true of certain persons, or of any one person, never to publish another number of the *Nation.*

This letter, in which a dishonouring imputation was specifically answered, and answered without using an offensive phrase, the *Pilot* refused to publish. I inserted it in the *Nation,* and as the *Pilot* was only another name for Mr. John O'Connell, the refusal went to swell an

work has been done in the world that some ugly caricature of it was not sure to start up to rival it at the moment, and sometimes get mistaken for it in the end. See Note at the end of the chapter on Controversy with the *Pilot.*

account for which there was a terrible reckoning in the end.*

At the same time, I wrote a letter to the secretary of the Repeal Association, which I desired to have laid before the next meeting, answering the pleasant inventions and ingenious glosses of Messrs. Broderick, Steele, and Fitzpatrick, on my article of the previous week. This meeting, lasting by adjournment for two days, was the most famous and fatal in all its annals.† It witnessed the Secession, long secretly plotted, but which proved to be charged with consequences little foreseen by its authors. Mr. John O'Connell hurried over from London, commissioned, as we were assured, to call on the Association, to choose between his father and the

* Mr. Lucas passed judgment on the transaction in the *Tablet*, as far as the newspaper was concerned. "The character of the *Pilot*," he said, "for every species of turpitude is now so well known, that it is impossible for any sane and honest man to take its assertion at even the lowest assignable value. A statement made by that journal is *prima facie* a lie." The writer in question, editor of the books cited, was Mr. Mark O'Callaghan. He became a Government informer in '48, and died a few years later in Tasmania, in the house of another Government informer sent to that country, to watch over O'Brien and Meagher. He had probably gone astray earlier. It was of him O'Connell declared, after his trial in '44, that a document known as the "Mullaghmast Ballad," given in evidence against the traversers, was "circulated by an individual who was in constant communication with the Crown lawyers." His only attempt to become a correspondent of the *Nation* ended in a characteristic manner. In 1843, during the O'Connell trial, he brought me a letter for publication, which after having glanced over I sent to the printing office. Late at night the foreman printer came to my house and awoke me, to ask advice under suspicious circumstances. The writer of the letter having gone to the office to read a proof of it after midnight, was observed to slyly slip into his pocket each sheet of the MS. as soon as it was read—contrary to the habit of newspaper offices, which is to retain the MS. as evidence of authorship. "What am I to do under the circumstances?" the foreman inquired. "Throw the letter out of the paper," I said, "and distribute the type;" and thus began and ended his attempted connection with the *Nation*.

† Monday and Tuesday, July 27th and 28th, '46.

Young Irelanders; both could not remain members. The attendance was immense, and the assembly was agitated by the mysterious tremor which seems to flow like mesmerism from a decisive event. Smith O'Brien, Meagher, Mitchel, and Henry Grattan, were present, as well as Mr. John O'Connell, Mr. Daniel O'Connell, junior, and the usual officials. The business was opened by reading a letter from O'Connell, in which he declared that the advocacy of physical force rendered it impossible for those who stood upon a constitution of the Repeal Association to co-operate with those who would not adhere to it. The subject did not admit of any species of compromise. These peaceful doctrines involved every case except defence against unconstitutional violence. He meant to publish an address to the people of Ireland, showing the infinite mischief which the advocates of physical force, who, notwithstanding the recent solemn resolutions, continued members of the Association, had inflicted on the country. To turn to pleasanter themes, he was able to report that the Government would no longer exclude Repealers from promotion in the professions, and it was probable the Chancellor would restore the superseded magistrates.

The purpose of this letter could not possibly be misunderstood—the Young Irelanders were to be pushed out of the Association. Their profession of peaceful intentions had reached the very verge of self-respect; to say more was impossible, without violating truth and conscience. The resolutions were confessedly framed to draw a line between Old and Young Ireland; and no

other line, it seemed, would suffice than one marking the inside and outside of Conciliation Hall. O'Brien endeavoured by private remonstrance with Mr. John O'Connell to avert a crisis, but without success. Then for the first time he took his side unequivocally with the young men. At the public meeting he spoke with vigorous sense, dignity, and force. After alluding to the offensive comments made a week before on his Kilrush speech, he said :—

" He did not go there to quarrel with any one; he went to aid in repealing the Union, and when he thought he could not promote this purpose, he would stay away. When he joined the Association he had determined never to be a party to a counter agency to that adopted by O'Connell; but at the same time he could not undertake to co-operate in proceedings which he considered unjust and impolitic. The Association had been called on to declare that no circumstances in any country would justify the use of arms for the attainment of any political amelioration; but this was a doctrine to which he did not subscribe. The best writers on government laid down that in free countries there were many circumstances which justified a recourse to arms. It was by the right of resistance on the part of the subject that the Queen held her throne. So it was with the kings of France, Belgium, Greece, and Holland; and in all these cases the right had been sanctioned by the public policy and international law of Europe. In Ireland in '82, if the demand of the volunteers for a free constitution had been rejected, he believed such a right would have arisen. What was most unfortunate respecting this question was that it was purely speculative; he was not aware that there was a single person connected with the Association, who desired an appeal to arms under the present circumstances. Such an appeal would be madness and wickedness, and neither O'Connell nor any of his family could be more determined in resisting it than he was. Had he been informed that it was

intended to propose this test, he would have attended the Committee, and endeavoured to procure a modification of it. He was afraid the tendency of the resolution and the letter read that day was to drive from the Association men identified in opinion with the *Nation* newspaper. This was a measure to which he could be no party. If there was any attempt to cut off the *Nation* from connection with the Association, or to exclude the gentlemen agreeing with it from the Committee, he would find it impossible to co-operate with the Association till they were restored. But why was such an alternative necessary? If anything in violation of the constitution of the Association was done, let the individual offending be dealt with; but to raise a speculative question to exclude certain persons was suicidal. It pained him to differ in opinion from the leader of the Association, but in all public bodies a reasonable difference of opinion should be allowed. He trusted that the breach was not irreparable, and that the past might be buried in a general oblivion.

"There was another question on which he felt bound to be perfectly explicit; the policy of Repealers in his opinion was to keep a distinct national party in the House of Commons, and support good measures, from whichever party they came. To maintain their independence they must not solicit favours from the Government, or, by accepting them, permit their mouths to be closed. In 1834 certain able and prominent Repealers—of whom the most distinguished was Mr. Sheil—took office under the Whigs; what was the result? He would not say they were convinced, but certainly they were silenced. If the Association meant to encourage such a system he could not coincide with them. The State trial had not discouraged the Repeal cause so much as the loss of Dungarvan. He trusted nothing would be done to destroy a confederacy the most powerful that ever existed for the achievement of a people's liberty."

It was a serious task for Mr. John O'Connell to answer a statement so simple, straightforward, and

moderate as this. He began with the Whigs. They were subject to suspicion and reproach in England for being the friends of Ireland; was it in accordance with Irish generosity to condemn them before they had time to show what they would do?

"As to patronage, places must be filled by men of education and acquirements; were they to be uniformly filled by enemies of the popular cause? Must avowed Repealers, though their health and their fortune were depressed, give the *pas* to them? Mr. O'Brien declared that had he known it was intended to propose the Peace Resolutions, he would have attended the Committee and have endeavoured to modify them. There might have been a want of form in not giving notice; but it must be remembered they were proposed by the founder of the Association, as a reiteration of its original principles. Those who accepted the test necessarily accepted it in the sense of the proposer; and, if those who accepted the fundamental principles were in a minority—if they were but a hundred, or twenty, or five, if there was no one but Daniel O'Connell himself—the rest, however talented or respectable, were in the Association under a mistake. If the child had grown too strong for its parent, the Association might adopt a resolution affirming that there was a case beyond that of mere defence, in which an appeal to arms was justifiable; then the Hall and the Repeal machinery would belong to them. But there could be no intercourse between them and O'Connell; there would be an impassable barrier between them. Look at the countries revolutionised by force. Take America; mob law prevailed, honest debts were repudiated by acts of the legislature, convents were pillaged, and the breeding of slaves was favoured and encouraged. Look at France; the press was shackled, the voice of public opinion impeded in every way, and one-fourth of the representatives were paid servants of the crown. These were the results of physical force. In Belgium there was an infidel party, which,

in the case of a conflict of the continental powers, would betray her to the invader. Her people wanted the tranquillity and happiness which would have flowed from the attainment of her independence by peaceful and moral means. If he appealed to all ancient and all modern history, the result would be the same. Whatever the consequences might be, therefore, he could not consent to modify the Resolutions. Though it was bitterly painful, he did not hesitate to say that it was not possible for Repealers who accepted the resolutions, to work with those gentlemen who persisted in opposing them. His father could not accept the aid of any man who did not agree with them. The Association had of course a right to modify them, to meet the views of Mr. O'Brien and the Young Ireland party, but that moment the founder of the Association must retire." *

After some smaller talk it was suggested that an adjournment was desirable; O'Brien supported this course. If the only alternative was the one pointed out by Mr. John O'Connell, he should retire from the meeting and leave Mr. O'Connell and his friends to pursue their own policy. But he would not quit the Association till he was expelled. Before the meeting separated Mr. Daniel O'Connell, Junior, announced the first blow struck for the national cause since the Whigs came into office. Dundalk had invited him to become a candidate,

* These marvellous views of foreign politics were expected doubtlessly to find believers somewhere. But it is scarcely conceivable that even Mr John O'Connell regarded the mob law in America as more shameful than Lord George Gordon's riots in England, or that he considered the repudiation of public loans by some of the State legislatures in the United States could match the shifting of English burthens on Ireland by the imperial parliament; or that there was as large a proportion of official and hired representatives in the Chamber of Deputies under Louis Philippe, as George III. maintained in the free Parliament of Ireland after its declaration of independence; or that he was ignorant that the infidel party in Belgium were, like Voltaire and Diderot, pupils and imitators of the infidel philosophers of England.

and he would inevitably be elected, because he was son to the Liberator and a sound Repealer.*

The adjourned meeting was opened by the secretary reading the letter of remonstrance which I had addressed to him. It was a lengthy document, justifying the policy of the *Nation*. Mr. John O'Connell answered in a still longer speech, and Mr. Mitchel responded; but letter and speeches have lost all interest in the momentous transactions with which the day closed. On the general question Mitchel declared that it was plain to all the world the cause of dissension in the Hall was not physical force; nobody was in the least afraid of physical force, but many were mortally afraid of Whiggery and place-begging.

Did they think, he demanded, that men, who had been one day begging at the door of the English Minister, would come next day to the Hall, to helpthe

* Mr. Daniel O'Connell was accordingly elected in a few days, and the result illustrated in a convincing manner the perils involved in a compact between the Repealers and the Government. He never opened his lips in parliament on the subject of Repeal, but in the fulness of time, after his father's death, accepted an appointment from a Whig statesman, and retired from politics *Quod erat demonstrandum*. The Whig Solicitor-General, Mr. Monahan, had gone as candidate to Dundalk in the first instance, expecting to be as successful as Mr. Sheil; but the public feeling about Dungarvan determined the electors not to receive him, and even disposed them to look coldly on Mr. Daniel O'Connell for the share his father had in that transaction. At a later period, when there was a general washing of soiled linen in Conciliation Hall, Mr. John Augustus O'Neill, the seconder of the Peace Resolutions, gave this account of the election:—"With reference to Dundalk, Mr. John O'Connell says it was offered to me. I will tell you the circumstances. It was canvassed by young Daniel O'Connell, and the reception he met with led him, and I believe Mr. O'Connell and others, to think that his election was doubtful; upon which Mr. O'Connell wrote from London, and advised that I should be asked to go down and offer myself. I said I would be very glad to represent any constituency of Irishmen, but I should consider myself doing the cause a disservice if I stood and was returned for a constituency that had met with coldness the son of O'Connell."

country to get rid of English ministers altogether? For his part he had entered the Association, believing it was to be made an instrument for wresting the country out of the hands of English parties, not a coadjutor with either of them in perpetuating its degradation.

"To be sure (he went on) it is now intimated to me and others pretty broadly that we can leave this Association. Truly we have that alternative; but, for my own part, I am not yet willing to adopt it, and I will tell you why. I entered it with a serious determination to do what in me lay to help what I fondly believed might become a great national movement for the liberation of Ireland; and a man who is in earnest in anything he sets about, is not easily driven from his purpose by discouragement or disgust. Besides (and I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous to say so), I am one of the Saxon Irishmen of the north, and you want that race of Irishmen in your ranks more than any others: you cannot well afford to drive even one away from you, however humble and uninfluential. And let me tell you, friends, this is our country as well as yours. You need not expect to free it from the mighty power of England by yourselves. Drive the Ulster Protestants away from your movement by needless tests, and you perpetuate the degradation both of yourselves and them. Keep them at a distance from you—make yourselves subservient to the old and well-known English policy of ruling Ireland always by one party or the other—and England will keep her heel upon both your necks for ever."

After an interval of the Head Pacificator, Meagher followed Mitchel. He justified my letter, and defended the *Nation* with the warmest sympathy. On the latter subject he said:—

"I have no more connection with the *Nation* than with the *Times*. I, therefore, feel no delicacy in appearing here this day in defence of its principles, with which I avow myself identified.

Yes, fully identified, my friends. The character of that journal is above reproach, and the ability that sustains it has won a European fame. The genius of which it is the offspring, the truth of which it is the oracle, have been recognised by friends and foes. I care not how it may be assailed—I care not however great may be the talent, however high may be the position of those who now consider it their duty to impeach its writings—I do think that it has won too splendid a reputation to lose the influence it has secured. The people whose enthusiasm has been kindled by the impetuous fire of its verse, and whose sentiments have been ennobled by the earnest purity of its teaching—to whom it has given songs for the hearth, the mountain, and the field—will not ratify, I trust, the censure that has been pronounced upon it in this Hall. Truth will have its day of triumph as its day of trial, and I do believe that the fearless patriotism which in those pages braved the prejudices of the day to enunciate new truths will triumph in the end."

There was not, he contended, the least necessity for the Peace Resolutions. Under existing circumstances an appeal to arms would be senseless; there might be a riot in the street, there would be no revolution in the country. The Registrary Club, the Reading Room, the hustings,—these would be the positions the Repealers would occupy. Votes, books, and reports, were the weapons they would employ. If a peaceful policy were pursued with sincerity and stern determination of purpose, he believed it would succeed.

He had objected to the new resolutions as unnecessary, he objected to them also, because by assenting to them he would have pledged himself to the unqualified repudiation of physical force at all times and under all circumstances. There were times and places that de-

manded force; opinion might operate against opinion, but force must be used against force:—

"The soldier is proof against an argument, but he is not proof against a bullet. The man that will listen to reason, let him be reasoned with; but it is the weaponed arm of the patriot that can alone avail against battalioned despotism. Then, my Lord Mayor, I do not disclaim the use of arms as immoral, nor do I believe it is the truth to say that the God of Heaven withholds His sanction from the use of arms. From the day on which, in the valley of Bethulia, He nerved the arm of the Jewish girl to smite the drunken tyrant in his tent, down to the hour in which He blessed the insurgent chivalry of the Belgian priests, His almighty hand hath been stretched forth from His throne of light, to consecrate the flag of freedom, to bless the patriot's sword. Be it for the defence, or be it for the assertion of a nation's liberty, I look upon the sword as a sacred weapon. And if, my lord, it has sometimes reddened the shroud of the oppressor, like the anointed rod of the high priest, it has, at other times, blossomed into flowers to deck the freeman's brow. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord, for in the cragged passes of the Tyrol it cut in pieces the banner of the Bavarian, and won an immortality for the peasant of Innspruck. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord, for at its blow a giant nation sprang up from the waters of the Atlantic, and by its redeeming magic the fettered colony became a daring free republic. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord, for it scourged the Dutch marauders out of the fine old towns of Belgium, back into their own phlegmatic swamps, and knocked their flag, and laws, and sceptre, and bayonets, into the sluggish waters of the Scheldt. My lord, I learned that it was the right of a nation to govern itself, not in this Hall, but upon the ramparts of Antwerp. I learned the first article of a nation's creed upon those ramparts, where freedom was justly estimated, and where the possession of the precious gift was purchased by the effusion of generous blood. My lord,

I admire the Belgians, I honour the Belgians for their courage and their daring; and I will not stigmatise the means by which they obtained a citizen king, a Chamber of Deputies—"

This was thrilling music; but Mr. John O'Connell had no ear for music which appealed to the nobler sentiments. He hastily interposed. It was the strongest conviction of his soul that it would not be safe for the Association to allow Mr. Meagher to proceed. He had thought that the debate might be again adjourned, but now he feared the time had come to say yea or nay to the question. The sentiments Mr. Meagher avowed were sentiments directly and diametrically opposed to those of the founder of the Association, and therefore the Association must cease to exist, or Mr. Meagher must cease to be a member of it. If the meeting approved of these sentiments he would retire. Captain Broderick and the Head Pacificator thought it essential to express a similar intention; in such a contingency they also would retire.

One of my friends has sent me his recollections of that memorable scene. "When Meagher began to speak, he was received with coldness, even with rudeness; but he gradually stole on the sympathy of the audience. He warmed on his subject, and the warmth became contagious; until when he rose to the height of his theme there appeared to be but one heart in the meeting, and it beat in accord with the orator. The enthusiasm of the people, suppressed for a time, broke out at last, like a sudden storm, in bursts of ecstacy. It was perhaps the greatest speech that historic hall had

ever echoed." This vivid sketch expresses, I have no doubt, the general conviction of the time, but it scarcely expresses mine. The speech was a remarkable intellectual feat; it sparkled with illustrations which exploded like fireworks; it sometimes by happy touches of humour tickled his audience into irresistible laughter; it often made them vibrate with passion; his languid blue eye glowed, and his slight form swelled, as it seemed, into nobler proportions as he repudiated the base doctrine of eternal submission to injustice. But for the purpose of the pending controversy, the oration was rash and inconsiderate; it lent some show to the false pretence on which the Peace Resolutions were founded. On the other hand, Mitchel's speech was quite naked of ornament, but it was animated by the higher eloquence of reason and conviction, and its plain vigour won something better than applause—assent and sympathy. He wanted to produce a result then and there, and his clear, strong sentences fell like strokes of the short Roman sword, lopping and maiming wherever they lighted. It was sometimes savage in its plainness, as when he described the result of driving out the Ulster men, but it was an occasion that justified the naked truth. It must be remembered, however, that one orator was a man, the other a boy. Mitchel was past thirty, the father of a family, long trained in professional and public business; Meagher was little past twenty—a period of life when young men are ordinarily afraid to hear their own voices—and his experience and discipline in the world's business had

lasted only a few months. Mr. John O'Connell's fears for the safety of the Association, which moved the profound depths of his soul, were fears, it will be understood, lest the Whig ministers (who had denounced Peel's prosecution in '43 as an injustice and a blunder) should prosecute the same party themselves, while its leader was employed in maintaining them in office at the serious risk of his popularity and influence.

O'Brien, who had watched the second day's debate in silence, now interposed. He spoke in grave and deliberate terms, and, it seems to me, anticipated the verdict of posterity on the transaction passing before him:—

"I am afraid that the alternative which has been presented to us by Mr. John O'Connell is of such a nature as necessarily to compel the termination of this discussion, because he gives us no other choice than his seceding from the Association, or closing this discussion. But I cannot allow this meeting to come to such a conclusion without expressing my opinion that the course of argument adopted by Mr. Meagher was perfectly fair and legitimate. I understand we were invited to come here to-day for the purpose of considering deliberately whether any gentleman can continue a member of this Association who entertains the opinion, conscientiously, that there are occasions which justify a nation resorting to the sword for the vindication of its liberties. Mr. Meagher has distinctly stated that he joined this Association for the purpose of obtaining repeal by peaceful and moral means alone. But he does not consider, nor do I consider, that when you invite us to a discussion of this description, we are precluded from asserting the opinion which, after all, is involved in the discussion: and for submitting such reasons as we feel ourselves at liberty to submit to our fellow-countrymen in vindication of the opinions which have been arraigned. Remember this,

gentlemen,—and it is fit you should remember it,—for the proceedings of this day are an event in Irish history. You are charged with being a people who will never give fair play to an adversary. You are charged with being willing slaves to any despot who may obtain the reins of power at a particular moment. This is the charge against the Irish people. I entertain a different opinion of them. I should designate as a calumniator the man who would give you such a character; but I ask you, are you now going to fortify, as far as regards this assembly, the assertion of your enemies, by putting down the man who is endeavouring calmly and dispassionately to discuss a question to which he was invited—which he was compelled to discuss? If this discussion be terminated, I shall have the satisfaction of entering my protest against the proceeding which put down Mr. Meagher on the present occasion."

Meagher attempted to complete his speech, but as Mr. John O'Connell rose at the same time, he gave way to him. The question, Mr. O'Connell said, was not should a young man be put down? but should the young man put down the Association? It was a question between the founder and certain objectors; if the members would not stand by the founder, let them adopt other resolutions and another leader.

O'Brien, considering that all chance of accommodation was now at an end, got up and left the Hall. The contemporary journals describe him as being accompanied by Mr. Meagher, Mr. Mitchel, Mr. P. J. Smyth, Fr. Meehan, Captain Bryan, Mr. Devin Reilly, and Mr. Gavan Duffy, and by a section of the meeting who followed and applauded them. This was the memorable Secession, which, from its first design up to its accomplishment, was the work of John O'Connell. The most

unbiassed of witnesses, his brother Maurice, afterwards declared that John did all the mischief.*

When a report of this transaction reached the provinces there was a pause of astonishment and dismay. The business was inexplicable; but it was O'Connell's doing, and he had doubtless good reasons, men whispered, though they might not be apparent at the moment. Besides, O'Brien and the rest had retired; and if men will retire, how can you prevent them? It was a pity, but it would all come right in the end. Some resolute spirits, on the other hand, insisted that the Secession must be only for a brief period; the right to return being reserved; at least till the country was appealed to. There were a million of enrolled members and five millions of sympathisers entitled to exercise an appellate jurisdiction over the proceedings in Conciliation Hall. Moreover, if it was intended to press on the national cause, the spectacle of independent men driven out of the organisation on so transparent a pretence, would be fatal to such a purpose, and must not be acquiesced in. Fr. Kenyon wrote to me urging this view, "I deny that the servile clique which haunts that Hall represents the spirit or manhood of the country." But if an appeal to the provinces secured a majority for the Seceders, a defeat would not be so disastrous as a victory which would exclude O'Connell from the Association he had created. Other provincial supporters took a more desponding view of the situation. Dr. Cane, who

* See note at the end of the chapter on "John O'Connell and the Secession."

had all along insisted that this result would be accomplished by Mr. John O'Connell—who had warned us that the way was being prepared for it by elaborate slander of the men to be got rid of—thought resistance for the moment hopeless and impolitic:—

"I have given to our sad position all the reflection I am capable of," he wrote me. "I have ascertained the opinions of all classes around me; I have ascertained them not merely in this city and county, but from surrounding counties also. I know much, too, of what is passing at headquarters, and the influences there working, and from all these there is at present no chance of a reconciliation—no chance of a public or concentrated expression of public opinion, or even of the opinion of a respectable minority in favour of the views of O'B. and the *Nation*. This does not arise because there are no approvers of these views and men, but it arises from the fact that public opinion is chained and controlled to an extent against which it is useless—nay, mischievous—to battle at the present moment. This state of things springs from many causes besides the immense influence of the individual opposed to you; individual opposition would not have sufficed, were it not for the long pre-arranged blackening of all your characters in the minds of the Catholic clergy, who are hereabouts to a man opposed to you, and view you as a body as little better than infidels, and most inimical to the Catholic Church. The priests generally will rejoice to hear you are laid prostrate, and all who abide by their views and follow in their track will echo their sentiments. This is an immense power you have to encounter; and any public meeting, anywhere in Ireland, would by its majority rule against you, and with the Association. You are not without supporters—earnest and devoted ones, too—but they scarcely dare to stir at a public meeting, and would be of little weight there. They are the young men, the reading men, the tradesmen, clerks, young shopkeepers, &c., who have been educated in Repeal reading rooms, and fed upon the *Nation*. They

will be, in a few years, the men of Ireland, but not yet. Nor must they be sacrificed in their honest devotion to noble opinions. At a public meeting they would be borne down by the priests and the men who will back the priests. No public move now—but wait a little while; be steady, firm to your purpose; no compromise of noble aspirations and high resolves; but as you value Ireland, let there be no recrimination or angry personality cast upon the idol of the people. This course will surrender no principle of honour or patriotism, and it will be a line of policy, the success of which will yet prove its value. No further collision now with an all-powerful opponent."

This was not a hopeful prospect; but, if it was a timid, it was not a wholly erroneous, survey of the position. Had O'Connell been content with pushing O'Brien and the others out of the Association, he might have done so with nearly perfect impunity. There would have been wide regret and bitter anger, but no effectual resistance. A Repeal Association of some sort would have remained; it would have gained no more recruits worth counting indeed, and the funds perhaps would have dwindled away; but such as it was, it would have answered to his touch, as a stringed instrument answers to the touch of an artist. But Mr. John O'Connell thought it necessary that the exclusion of the Seceders should be justified by representing them as men of the worst principles, engaged in the worst designs, and that the *Nation* should be destroyed root and branch; and it is an instructive lesson to note how many successive outrages it required to awaken the sense of justice and the moral indignation which is always sleeping in the breast of an honest people. No

considerate man will be much surprised at the acquiescence the country was disposed to exhibit. The test of patriotism had long been devotion to O'Connell; coldness or indifference towards him was regarded as sure evidence of incivism, and to utter a word against him was treason to Ireland. He was not so much trusted and beloved as worshipped. Men of his own age had lived under a system in which justice or fair play was unknown; the enemy that tortured them was called Protestant Ascendancy, the friends who counselled and sheltered them was O'Connell and his allies, the priests. What wonder that they looked in the first instance with suspicion on persons, some of them Protestants, and all men of yesterday, who were denounced by these tried friends as dangerous and untrustworthy. In the class where the political power of Ireland at that time resided—the shopkeepers and farmers—there was a mass of honest prejudice and blind devotion which was nearly impenetrable. The Irish are a clannish race; but, in truth, few nations have escaped the paralysis or the paroxysms of subserviency. Since that era the French people have sacrificed the most experienced statesmen, accomplished orators, and devoted patriots of their time to the worship of a name; and the nation most contemptuous of Irish enthusiasm for O'Connell swept out of Parliament their foremost men—men who had accomplished memorable reforms on their behalf—at the bidding of a political play-actor, who had clambered to the place of Prime Minister.

O'Connell immediately returned from London, and

there was intense anxiety in the public mind to know what he would do, and the most conflicting surmises. What he did was to adopt and applaud all that Mr. John O'Connell had accomplished, and to carry the victory another stage. If Mr. O'Brien chose to return to the standard of peaceful agitation, separating himself from the persons whose violent opinions he had sanctioned, he would be cheerfully received. As for the *Nation*, the Association would have no further connection with it, and he referred that subject to the Committee for immediate action. There never was a moment, he was convinced, when the interests of Ireland were so deeply involved in the conduct of its inhabitants, for so much good was never tendered by any Government, and prudence and discretion were never so necessary.*

The Committee speedily reported that it was essential to the safety of the Association (to protect it, no doubt,

* Another generation, which will have access to the contemporary correspondence and diaries, will learn how soon the new compact became known in official circles. Lord Jeffrey, writing to his successor in the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* at this period (August, 1846), respecting an article written by Senior, speaks of "the interest of a Government which professes to pacify Ireland by conciliation, and is actually in concert with O'Connell" (Macvey Napier's Correspondence). And one may read in Greville's Memoirs (August 7th):—"I am very glad that O'Connell has defeated Young Ireland. O'Connell is behaving exceedingly well just now. He went to Lord Besborough before he left for Ireland, and told him that after defeating the Coercion Bill he felt bound to give the Government any assistance he could in repressing outrage and restoring peace, and that they might depend on his doing so. In fact, he actually means to support the Government as strongly as he can; and he carries the priests entirely with him, who appear to have all determined against the violent party. Besborough told O'Connell that he was determined to restore peace to the disturbed counties by deluging them with soldiers; and Dan replied, 'The more soldiers the better.'" "The violent party." The slander of Lord John Russell had borne good fruit.

from prosecution by the Government it was maintaining in office) that it should not concur in any way, direct or indirect, in the sale or circulation of the *Nation*. As it never had concurred in the sale, this was making assurance doubly sure. The country, skilfully prompted from head-quarters, rallied round the Association triumphantly. The weekly Repeal rent, which had long averaged about £100, shot up to £400 the first week after the Secession, and £330 the second week. Resolutions thanking Mr. John O'Connell for his wisdom and sagacity began to drop in, and a number of bishops threw their great weight into the preponderant scale. Dr. Cantwell, Bishop of Meath, after applauding the head and heart of Mr. John O'Connell, as tested in recent critical transactions, felt it his solemn duty to declare that "the Catholic members who would advocate a resort to physical force in the debates of the Association must be regardless of their duty as Christians, and insensible of their obligations as Roman Catholics." As no one had advocated a resort to physical force in the debates of the Association, this might be considered a shot fired out of range. But Dr. Higgins, the bishop who had been so beligerent in '43, left nothing to be desired in the matter of plain speaking. In the happy diocese of Ardagh he declared moral force reigned supreme:—

"We have no physical force men in this diocese. Neither have we, thank God, any schoolboy philosophers, false and sanguinary Repealers, or Voltarian newspapers. All our exertions for the restoration of Ireland's independence are based on the

sacred and immutable principles of true Christian morality, and we pity the folly and abhor the wickedness of any man who would rest his patriotism on other grounds."

If other districts were less fortunate, it was easy to be accounted for: "the *Nation* was the most dangerous publication that had ever appeared in Ireland." It seemed to him, and "to his clergy and to their flocks, to tend to the direct overthrow of Catholic faith and morals." But they had applied a prompt remedy to so serious a peril. They had ignominiously expelled it from almost all of their literary institutions in Ardagh, and it was to be hoped that wherever unsuspecting Catholics still received it, they would soon sever the bad connection. He implored the Catholic priests and laity to turn their attention to this urgent matter. Dr. MacGennis, parish priest of Clones, who was an active newspaper controversialist in those days, slyly suggested that O'Brien's offences were hereditary.

"We approve," he wrote, "of your just denunciation of those silly slaves of ambition who, with professions of patriotism, have been causing disorder, and with lofty pretensions of ridding Ireland of the stranger, have, *like Brian Borhoime*, by usurping the authority of our acknowledged chief, retarded our hopes, and given strength and courage to the foe and the oppressor."

Which, however, was perhaps not quite an accurate statement of the result of Brian's usurpation. This energetic gentleman took prompt measures with the offending newspaper:—

"I think it right to inform you," he wrote, "that a considerable time since I ejected the *Nation* from this parish.

Individuals have since privately employed a person in this town to supply them with it; I ordered that person last week to write back to the *Nation* office to stop it."

Energetic measures, certainly; but this was scarcely the liberty of which we had dreamed, or the justice and tolerance we had endeavoured to teach. It seemed doubtful, to inconsiderate persons, whether the garrison law administered by Chief Justice Pennefather was much more arbitrary or unreasonable than the patriarchal rule established in the parish of Clones or the diocese of Ardagh.

The Conservative press, from long experience of Irish affairs, and perhaps because they had predicted the catastrophe from the beginning, assumed that the destruction of Young Ireland would now be consummated. "Ah, ha!" chuckled the *Evening Mail*, "the old tactician moves his bishops, and now the game will end in a checkmate." Looking back over the space of more than a generation, when the men in question have been tested by time and events, these extravagances sound like a ghastly pleasantry, but at the moment they constituted a serious danger. The bishops were, no doubt, prompted to take this course, and drugged with misrepresentations. There is a subtle power of self-deception, which makes it easy for men to think themselves right and their opponents wholly wrong; but those who exercise a great power are bound to be scrupulous in the application of it, and if they fail to do so, cannot escape the inevitable penalty. Had the charges been true, had there been any substantial

element of truth in them, the denunciation would have been justified, and the *Nation* would probably have perished. But as they were not true, but wholly untrue, a widely different result, as we shall see, ensued.

These offending young men, it appeared, were not only dangerous infidels, but bad patriots. "I arraign Young Ireland," said O'Connell himself, "with being treacherous to Repeal." The evidence of their treason was that the gentry and the Northern Protestants were deterred from becoming Repealers by their violent opinions; both parties being evidently impatient to join O'Connell but for their dread of Smith O'Brien and his friends. My letter, read on the day of the Secession, furnished a further text for O'Connell. He was generous enough to suggest that, in addition to treachery to Repeal, I had been guilty of something which he could barely distinguish from perjury:—

"There have been a multitude of commentators on this letter; but I don't think I can be wrong when I say that working out liberty by 'a nation's might,' combined with offers of assistance from abroad, through a 'surer source,' must, in the simplicity of language, mean a resort to arms. During the State prosecutions we made affidavits, denying that we had entered into any conspiracy to break the peace of the country. I don't insinuate that Mr. Duffy swore falsely; but I do say this (and I believe him incapable of intentional swearing what was false), that his oath was inconsistent with his newspaper, and that he was engaged in a conspiracy with others, though he denied the fact on his oath."

I read this shameful statement with something like the outraged sensibility of Kent at the blind fury of the angry, ungrateful, insane old king in the tragedy.

Only two members resigned immediately, Captain Bryan* and a grandson of John Keogh; O'Connell, to mark his sense of the pettiness of the demonstration, moved with contemptuous courtesy the erasure of their names from the books. They were the ridiculous exception, as it seemed, which proved the unanimity of the country. Repeal wardens of various districts transmitted the thanks of their constituents to Mr. John O'Connell for the solidity of judgment and straightforward honesty he had displayed in the recent controversy; and he was now constantly put forward, even when his father was present, to open the business of the day. The Young Liberator, it appeared, had transacted his eighteenth Brumaire with triumphant success.

The Northern Protestants, whom we were accused of alienating from the national cause, however, intervened by competent spokesmen to declare that Repeal was indeed seriously damaged in Ulster, but not from the cause suggested. Mr. Gray Porter, in a trenchant letter, in which he set out by stating that he was opposed to physical force now, as he had been opposed to it in 1843, when Mr. O'Connell was holding his physical force monster meetings, affirmed that the North was kept away from the national organisation by unpublished accounts, and the method of transacting

* Captain Bryan was a Tasmanian squatter, who had returned to Ireland to enjoy a moderate competence made at the Antipodes. He was an honest, resolute, passionate patriot, who, when things were not going to his satisfaction in Conciliation Hall, was accustomed to blow his nose in so loud and menacing a manner that Meagher used to suggest he "endangered the safety of the Association."

business in Conciliation Hall. Over £130,000 had been subscribed, and O'Connell kept exclusive control of the whole of it—not from any sordid motive, he believed, but because he loved to be master. But Protestants would never join an association with a despotic and irresponsible treasurer. Mr. John Martin,* another Northern Protestant, but at that time wholly unknown to the country, had been a member of the Association since the State trial, but had only once taken part in its proceedings, to counsel a regular publication of the accounts. He was greatly moved by the Secession, and came to town to remonstrate with the Association. He was a close friend of Mitchel's, and well known to all the Young Irelanders, through social intercourse and correspondence—a circumstance which naturally stimulated his interest in this contest; but the danger to the public cause would have moved him in any case. After attending one meeting as a silent spectator, he wrote his impressions to the *Freeman's Journal* in language of characteristic firmness and good sense. He was strictly bound, he said, by the original rules, but if Mr. O'Connell had imported any new principle into the Peace Resolutions, he had no more right to impose it on members than to require them to wear a certain livery, or observe a certain regimen, or subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. Were the members, at the command of O'Connell, to deny the rules of fair play, and to forbid freedom of speech in the only substitute we had for an

* Known to Englishmen in later times as Home Rule member for Meath.

Irish Senate? As a Protestant of Ulster, he declared that the present condition of the Association was ruining the cause of Repeal among his class. Their chief objection to Repeal was a dread of Catholic ascendancy; they feared that freedom of speech and civil and religious liberty would be at the mercy of O'Connell and the Catholic clergy. The abject sub mission to his authority in the recent proceedings would naturally strengthen these injurious prepossessions. For himself, he was far from desiring to oppose the rightful authority of O'Connell; he was proud to have a man of his gifts as leader, and he recognised how natural was the gratitude of Catholics to him for unparalleled services; but if he employed his authority to minister to accidental personal grudges, Repealers owed it to themselves and to him to vindicate the principles of public liberty. The *Freeman* declined to publish this letter; and Mr. Martin announced his intention of attending the next meeting in Conciliation Hall, and stating his opinions in the presence of O'Connell. The Young Irelanders strongly dissuaded him. He was physically quite unfit for such an encounter; and the sweetness and simplicity of his character, which would impress a circle of friends, would be lost on a hostile assembly. It was finally agreed that he should write to the General Committee. He wrote accordingly, declaring his adhesion to the peace principles on which the Association was founded, but his decided objection to the dictatorial conduct by which Mr. John O'Connell had brought about the Secession, and to the withdrawal

of the *Nation* from reading-rooms entitled to receive it under a distinct regulation, and in return for money paid: a proceeding justified on the ungenerous pretence that the journal had committed a crime of which a Tory Government found it impossible to convict it. In reply, Mr. Ray informed him, by order of the Committee, that "inasmuch as he dissented from the resolutions of the Association, he ceased to be a member of that body." Mr. Ray did not specify to what resolutions, or when, or how, Mr. Martin had dissented; but as his letter of remonstrance was the only communication he had with the Association, it was plain that this letter furnished the grounds for his expulsion.* Such a principle was never before heard of among civilised men. A member of a political or social organisation who offends against its rules is liable to be expelled on due notice, and by a specific vote; but that a member of a deliberative body, who remonstrates against a proceeding which he considers objectionable, should *ipso facto*, by the mere circumstance of stating his objection, cease to be a member, is a basis of union too insane for Bedlam. On this principle, the Opposition in the House of Commons would forfeit their seats the first time they objected to the action of the Government. But that an association professing to invite men of all classes to join its ranks should set such an example, and that they should select as victim one of the few Northern Protestants who answered their call, argued that they had abandoned all hope or desire of promoting Repeal. The class to which

* All these documents will be found in the *Nation*, 2nd August, 1846.

O'Brien belonged, the landed gentry, and the students and young professional men represented by the other Seceders, were already alienated, and now the Northern Protestants were affronted. The proceeding is intelligible upon the hypothesis that the Association was to be reduced to the condition of a drudge, which Mr. John O'Connell could control at pleasure, and not intelligible upon any other theory that I can conjecture.

Mr. Martin could no longer be restrained from asserting his rights, and attended the next meeting in Conciliation Hall for the purpose; but when he rose to speak, O'Connell declared he could not be heard. "You cannot listen to this gentleman, Mr. Chairman," he said, "for he is not a member of the Association. He has taken the indescribable liberty of writing a letter to the Committee, although he is not a member, and I now call on you to prevent his being heard. We are not to be intruded on by the incivility of any person not belonging to our body." In truth, he was as much a member as Mr. O'Connell; and when he took the indescribable liberty of writing to the Committee, had no idea that any one could question his membership; but the Head Pacificator and Captain Broderick clamoured him down as a peculiarly dangerous and objectionable person, and the attempt came to an end.*

Bishops still sent in their adhesion to the Peace

* Some persons rushed to the conclusion that Mr. Martin had not paid his subscription, and by this omission had ceased to be a member; but he wrote a note to the newspapers, announcing that in the previous February he had paid a pound, and received his card of membership for the current year.

Resolutions, and some applauded Mr. John O'Connell for his conspicuous merits, but there was a falling off, it was observed, in the denunciation of the dangerous infidels who alarmed Dr. Higgins; and even the universal efficacy of moral force was not always admitted. Fr. Kenyon, the young priest whose speech at Kilrush had made a sensation, returned to the charge, and flatly denied that the doctrine of moral force was universally or exclusively true. On the contrary, it was not open to any one but a fanatic to entertain such an opinion. No law, natural or revealed, made blood-shedding a crime. It was practised by the Jews, under the immediate direction of the Almighty; it was practised by all Christian governments, with the sanction of Catholic theologians. There were soldiers among the first believers in Christ, and among the Christian martyrs, who received their crown without being asked to repent of their profession. Self-defence, forsooth! Was it in self-defence the Crusaders went forth?—types of the deepest devotion, the purest chivalry, of self-sacrifice and endurance. And what of their allies: of the popes and their bulls, the bishops and their indulgences, the hermits and their exhortations, the monks and their prayers, the saints and their blessings? What an impious proposition it was that forbade the use of physical force in all contingencies! One drop of blood, one fiddlestick! The proposition was false to reason and to manhood, to the dignity of the living and the honour of the dead, and pushed to its legitimate consequences, subversive of all government.

That a curate should presume to deal with the *dicta* of his spiritual superiors with such merciless logic was a scandal to many weak-minded persons; and though a young priest here and there secretly admired, and perhaps timidly applauded him, the bulk of the clergy stood aloof in angry indignation. O'Connell had established in Ireland the astonishing practice, unknown elsewhere in Christendom, of not answering the censure or criticism of a priest, unless a bishop happened to be of a different opinion, in which case the priest was treated without ceremony, and, indeed, without mercy. But there is no hierarchy in logic, and carrying this practice into politics produced in latter times (as sooner or later it was sure to do) a serious, and even dangerous, reaction. There were premonitory symptoms of it even then. The local Vicar Apostolic (the title at that time of the Catholic bishops in England) had a grievance against certain Repeal wardens in Manchester, of the merits of which I know nothing, and on the bishop's complaint, O'Connell caused them, *ipso facto*, to be dismissed from office. Fr. Hearne, an Irish priest, probably concerned in the contest, came to Dublin to urge that they might be reinstated, inasmuch as Conciliation Hall was not a court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases. O'Connell told him "he would not allow him to be heard." Fr. Hearne, in a letter to Mr. Ray, requested that the grounds on which he abandoned the case of his parishioners might be made known to the Committee, and slyly suggested that, after all, O'Connell's eleven measures and Whig alliance might be better than Repeal

—if in an Irish Parliament there was to be no greater freedom than poor men enjoyed in Conciliation Hall.

A still more awkward *contretemps* followed. Dr. Maginn, the Bishop of Derry, a man of remarkable vigour and great popularity, transmitted the resolutions of his diocese on the moot question, and they were ordered by acclamation to be inserted on the minutes; but when they came to be scrutinized, they were found to contain the identical reservation upon which the Seceders had been forced to retire. "Without pronouncing on the abstract question whether nations should, under any circumstances, appeal to arms, it is certain," they said, "that moral force is consonant with the genius of Christianity, and applicable to the case of Ireland."

As Mr. Martin's exclusion created another new rule, Mitchel wrote to the secretary to enquire whether his own name was still on the books as a member, and, if not, when, and on what grounds, he had been expelled? He reminded the Committee that he was a Repealer; that he entered the Association sincerely submitting to its rules, which he had uniformly obeyed; that he was an advocate for the policy of moral force, and moral force alone, for obtaining the legislative independence of the country; and that he cordially adopted the principles set forth in the late resolutions of the diocese of Derry. Mr. Ray replied, on behalf of the Committee, that Mr. Mitchel had ceased to be a member, and that they could not enter into any correspondence with him on the

matter of his letter.* At the same time, O'Gorman wrote to the secretary to say that the treatment of Mr. Martin suggested the necessity of his enquiring whether he was still recognised as a member. On moral force he had stated his opinions in the Association; and with respect to the *Nation*, had he been in Dublin he would have resisted its withdrawal from the reading-rooms. Mr. Ray replied that his declaration was inconsistent with the principle on which alone the Committee could associate with any gentleman, and that he had virtually ceased to be a member. The Rev. Mr. Meehan sent a remonstrance against the treatment of the *Nation* and the enforced retirement of Smith O'Brien, and was informed that, "as he did not acquiesce in the principles on which the Association was based," he had ceased to be a member. Mr. Barry, who had been on circuit at the date of the Secession, requested, without entering into controversy, to have his name removed from the list of members: a proceeding which O'Connell approved and applauded. Mr. Denny Lane, who had returned to Cork to conduct the business in which his family were engaged, also resigned. Mr. Lane's letter was courteous in form, but in substance hard to digest. "As the policy lately adopted by the Repeal Association," he said, "and the recent expulsion of several of its independent members without cause, charge, form, or notice, seems to me to be calculated, if not designed, to perpetuate the legislative union, and to extinguish freedom of opinion in Ireland, I request that you will immediately

* *Nation*, August 29th.

remove my name from the list of members of that body." O'Connell interposed, and declared it was unnecessary to read any more of these communications. A little later, T. D. McGee, who had not received his card of membership since the payment of his subscription, demanded it. "Of physical force," he said, "I will say *nothing*. I dislike meddling with abstract principles, and I think my brother members should avoid them, as dangerous to the public cause, and ruinous to their continuous existence as a corporation." He was informed that in consequence of this letter "he was not, and could not be, a member of the Association."

These were Young Irelanders fighting their own battle or maintaining their personal independence, and their fortitude gave no indication of the general state of opinion in the country.* Nor did they make any attempt to elicit it. They knew it was determined to destroy them and ruin the *Nation*, but they hoped that forbearance might make an honourable reconciliation still possible. We were vehemently appealed to by impatient friends not to endure so much wrong without reprisals; reminded that Mr. John O'Connell and a few paid officials were not the Repeal Association; that some of our assailants were as defenceless against criticism as a naked body against a sword; that on the Federal question we had saved the cause by compelling O'Connell

* Some Repeal wardens wrote to the *Nation* that they had thrown up their office, notably Mr. McNally of Newry and Mr. Murray of Athlone, and that their letters were neither read in Conciliation Hall nor published in the newspapers; but in general there was a pause of consternation.

to snap his fingers at his own proposal; that Munster, not Leinster, was the true seat of the movement; that the Protestant Nationalists, the Irish in England and America, and the younger Catholic clergy would support us; that by silence we were strengthening the false assumption that we had no friends in the country, and, what touched us closer, that we were permitting free opinion to be quashed—that

> "Unshackled will, frank utterance of the mind,
> Without which freedom dies and laws are vain."

But we were resolved to push forbearance to its limits.*

Meantime, the war was carried on vigorously in Conciliation Hall. The Famine and Repeal were forgotten; the one object for which the Association seemed to exist was to assail the *Nation* and the Seceders. At the fifth meeting after the Secession, the Chairman, Mr. O'Dowd, was able to furnish an interesting census of the Repeal party; there were exactly eight supporters of the insane and perilous policy of the Young Irelanders in the country against a million steadfast adherents of O'Connell.† The Head Pacificator on the same day undertook to announce news which would gratify all

* I explained our motives at the time with sufficient plainness. "It is not to conciliate our accusers we exercise forbearance—not to get this journal taken once more into favour—emphatically we say that the *Nation* can do without Conciliation Hall better than Conciliation Hall can do without the *Nation*—but because we should feel the sin and shame lie heavy on our own souls if we were conscious that we had done an act or written a word to perpetuate or exasperate these mad quarrels. Better that the *Nation*, and all who contribute to it, were sunk in the Red Sea than that they should become the watchword of faction, the pretext of division, the rock whereon to make shipwreck of so noble a cause!"—*Nation*, August.

† Repeal Association, September 1st. This skilful statistician naturally got an appointment from the Whigs in good time.

good men. He had just returned from Kilrush (where Smith O'Brien had been entertained a little before), and Fr. Kenny, the parish priest, authorised him to inform the father of his country that the *Nation* had been expelled from the local reading-room, and, what was still better, the agent, under his influence, had ceased to sell it. So much for the journal which had tried to "imperil the sublime and sanctified movement for the bloodless and crimeless regeneration of the country, and its restoration to the nationality wrenched away by Pitt and Castlereagh, by a hellish avulsion."* The Pacificator had considered it his duty to search for evidence of the wickedness of the *Nation*, and had fortunately found a "hellish article" enunciating "the infernal Young Ireland war policy," "the most infernal article that ever appeared, even in the *Nation*"—which luckily enables us to gauge the profoundest depths of its iniquity.†

* But the glorious news was as unveracious as the bulletins of various other great victories. In the next number of the *Nation* a letter appeared from Mr. Brennan, the agent in question, denying both statements; he continued to circulate the *Nation* as agent, and the newsroom which had been refused an Association copy continued to buy the paper out of private funds.

† As some readers may desire to see this specimen of atrocity, we print it as it was cited. It was taken from a review of John O'Connell's edition of his father's speeches (in the *Nation* of December 28th, 1844, from which some extracts have already been given (*ante* page 140):—"From 1793 to 1829"—for thirty-six years—"the Irish Catholics struggled for emancipation. That emancipation was but admission to the bench, the inner bar, and parliament. It was won by self-denial, genius, vast and sustained labours, and lastly, by the sacrifice of the forty-shilling freeholders—the poor veterans of the war—and by submission to insulting oaths; yet it was cheaply bought. Not so cheaply, perhaps, as if won by the sword, for on it were expended more treasures, more griefs, more intellect, more passion, more of all which makes life welcome, than had been needed for war; still it was cheaply bought, and Ireland has glorified herself, and will through ages triumph in the victory of '29."

"Ye men of Ireland," cried the Pacificator, when he had read this

Smith O'Brien, who had been obliged to listen to eulogies on himself in Conciliation Hall, of the class which a modest man is apt to loathe, was also handed over to the Head Pacificator. He had suggested that one of the offences of the *Nation* was the support it had given him in prison, and on this subject the Pacificator declaimed energetically:—

"I have no faith whatever in what is called the science of phrenology, but if I had, I would expect to see an organ of sweet self-esteem upon the head of Smith O'Brien, as large as a young 'Sugar Loaf Mountain,' for his inordinate sublimity of self-delusion in thinking that the august O'Connell, and John, and O'Hea, who sits near me, and Mr. Ray, and yourself, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Fitzpatrick, and I myself, and all the other O'Connellites of Ireland, would, through any personal consideration for him, drag our souls, like rotten carrion, through the stinking mire of deliberate falsehood, through Machiavelian refinement of hypocrisy, to injure the *Nation*, not for our true cause of opposition to its war principles, but because it supported him in his efforts for the deprivation of his liberty, and his eagerness for 'martyrdom.'"

Somewhat later the Pacificator was able to announce that the man whom O'Connell had chosen to lead the national party during his imprisonment was in truth, and was known to be, a confirmed double-dealer:—

"The person who aspires to the captainship of Young Ireland, Mr. William Smith O'Brien, at the time when he was a member

'infernal article,' "My countrymen, for more than fifty years the people of 'green Erin of the streams' have been under the tuition of Dan, and I will not, therefore, put such a bad compliment to your acumen as to think it at all necessary to give or comment upon that

'Thrice blasted, thrice infected'

paragraph."

of the Catholic Association of two years' standing—in name alone a member, but its enemy in reality."

After a little, O'Connell himself condescended to this Thersites vein :—

"Some of the English called Mr. O'Brien a Brummagem martyr, I don't call him so, but I show him that other people can trace the Secession to its proper source."

The other Seceders naturally fared worse. O'Connell constantly spoke of them in stern contempt; Mr. John O'Connell, as became his elevated position, in pitiful commiseration; and the poor Pacificator spluttered calumny and ribaldry.

The process of cutting off the *Nation* from the reading-rooms which it had created did not go on altogether smoothly. Some of them protested that the money they subscribed was given on condition of getting the paper, and that the arrangement amounted to a contract; if the Association would not forward the paper, let them return the money. The Loughrea Repealers announced that for peace sake they would relinquish their claim to a rebate and pay for the paper out of their own pockets. Then the last word was spoken; Mr. Ray informed them that no assistance would be given to any reading-room into which the *Nation* was admitted, on any conditions. Remonstrants were offered the alternative of taking the *Pilot*. It is probable that the proposal would not have been accepted at any time; but, as the proclamations and other Castle advertisements, by which the Irish government, since the Union, had kept alive a base

anti-national press, were now given to the *Pilot*, some of the remonstrants replied that what they wanted was a Repeal newspaper, not a Castle hack.

These, however, were playful sallies compared to what followed. A couple of weeks after the Secession, O'Connell, in a speech of five columns, set himself to prove that the *Nation* had committed High Treason. Not some sentimental or rhetorical excess, but the offence for which men are hanged and quartered. He quoted Chief Justice Eyre and Chief Justice Holt, Lord Mansfield and Lord Ellenborough; he ransacked the State Trials and the Pleas of the Crown, to support his case. It was a curious evidence of how far he had strayed away from the "Repeal Year," that if the law of these prerogative judges was good against the *Nation*, it was still better against the monster meetings. "If persons do assemble themselves"—said Holt, C.J.—"and act with force in opposition to some law which they think inconvenient, and hope thereby to get it repealed, this is levying war, and treason." The extracts from the *Nation* cited to prove the imputed offence were printed in italics and capitals and double capitals, to give them the necessary significance, which otherwise no one could detect. The justification of this solemn arraignment was that Lord John Russell had charged the *Nation* with preaching separation, to be effected through social disorder. How could he, he asked, but distrust persons whom an English statesman denounced as separatists and rebels? How indeed, seeing how moderate and just the judgment of English statesmen

on Irish nationalists has always been? A dozen years earlier the same statesman had described O'Connell himself as plotting to set up a ferocious Celtic republic; and another English statesman had put him on his trial, and put him in gaol, for the offence of conspiring to seduce the army and overthrow the authority of the Crown in Ireland.

The first impression of timid persons was that a denunciation in Conciliation Hall was merely the prelude, as in the case of the Railway Article, of a Government prosecution. But this was a mistake; the motive was to frighten an aged prelate with a prodigious bogey. Dr. Blake, the Bishop of Dromore, who was a constant reader of the *Nation*, and whom I had the happiness to count among my personal friends, wrote a letter to the Association, advising that these idle differences should terminate, and the Seceders be recalled. O'Connell, instead of reading the letter, sent a dispatch to the bishop, entreating him to withdraw it. He would go down on his knees to induce him to do so; its publication would be so certain to promote further dissensions. He was willing to sacrifice anything but principle and the safety of the Association; but he could assure his venerated friend that the members would be liable to the penalties of High Treason if the Seceders were taken back with the opinions they had professed.†

* See "Young Ireland," page 423.

† O'Connell's letter will be found in Miss Cusack's "Life of the Liberator." The *Morning Chronicle* was ashamed of help of this character:—"We think the politics of the *Nation*," said the Whig

But though the country was slow to speak, we were not denied the sympathy of minds and hearts which outrun the multitude. The gifted woman, who had sung duty and courage in such inspiring strains, was among the first to bid us not doubt of the future:—

"I wish to express my sympathy," she wrote, "with you and your noble fellow-workers that, like all great men of every era, you should be for a season misunderstood. But what wonder? You are tolerant, therefore hated by bigots; independent, therefore feared by intrigants; men of one object, therefore banned and excommunicated by those who have two—their country and themselves, for you are a reproach to them. But all noble natures, all minds that reverence truth, earnestness, courage, sublime self-sacrifice, will revere your names as talismans to wake high thoughts and nerve to noble deeds. You have been given a holy mission, and with the zeal of Hebrew prophets, the faith and love of Christian apostles you have uttered the word committed to you. It was no spasmodic, no galvanic life you

journalist, "to the last degree wild and mischievous, and we are delighted to see so dangerous a party as Young Ireland effectually disabled; but there is no forgetting the near political and moral relationship between the *Nation* of 1846 and the O'Connell of 1843; and there is something disagreeable in hearing the hero of the Monster Meetings lay down the law of treason so very like a Tory Attorney-General." And the new doctrine, notwithstanding its convenience to the Whigs, was admitted to be no better than a "servile paradox." Even the *Times* admitted that there was something to be said for the Young Ireland policy. But Mr. John O'Connell recognised in such an admission a sure evidence of our unsoundness and incivism. "The *Times* had again commenced its odious calumnies against the people of Ireland and her venerated clergy. These papers upheld the Young Ireland party. This would show the people who were their enemies. To be praised by such would be a disgrace—to be calumniated by them was an honour." This judgment was, perhaps, scarcely fair; at any rate, it was perplexing; for a few months earlier from the same tribune, O'Connell himself had recognised the approval of the *Times* as an important evidence of opinion. "The English newspapers are beginning to see our position in its true light, and even the *Times* has found out that Daniel O'Connell is in the right. I look with pleasure on the sentiments of the *Times*; it shows how the wind blows; it is a kind of weathercock in politics, possessing no power over the wind itself, but indicating the direction in which it blows." But circumstances alter cases.

gave your country, but a strong, healthy, vital current, which you sent flowing through her veins. If others gave her freedom, you alone strove to make her worthy of freedom. How futile the sneers at your irreligion!—as if infidelity and such genius, such a purpose as yours ever co-existed. Bleak, selfish infidelity could never have originated the sublime, the apostolic devotion of your lives, with all the thousand gifts and hopes and passions of youth and intellect like yours, for your country alone. Truly it needs divine men to exhibit anything so divine. But, courage, friends! By the blessing of God you are not destined to be martyrs by the pang without the palm. Your existence is an era in your country. The gospel you preach cannot be silenced, for it is the word of God—it is truth. You have given the people a baptism of knowledge, and it cannot be unavailing, for the light is the life of men. You will suffer, but you must reign. Only have courage. Oh, if you were to fall now, if you were to sink beneath calumny, malignity, preconcerted insult, and systematised misrepresentation, as many might do, I know of no hope for Ireland. But you will not fail, nor fall, nor falter. Men whom the Eternal chooses for His work have a destiny. They cannot die till that work be done. Therefore 'advance, advance on chaos and the dark,' and may God's blessing rest on your noble hearts. Pardon a stranger thus intruding; but my heart burned within me, and I must speak."

Mangan, in a noble ode, preached the same doctrine:—

"By your souls! I implore you,
Be leal to your mission—
Remembering that one
Of the two paths before you
Slopes down to Perdition!

"To you have been given
Not granaries and gold,
But the Love that lives long
And waxes not cold;

And the Zeal that hath striven
Against Error and Wrong,
And in fragments have riven
The chains of the Strong!"

It is curious to note how Mangan's nobler nature needed the vehicle of verse for its expression. A little earlier he wrote me in the strange hybrid prose he loved :—

"May Gog and Magog watch over thee, my dear friend, and the great *Παν* (whom this weather must have turned into a frying-*Παν*) extend unto thee his protection! Mayest thou find favour in the eyes of Bramah the Originator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Seeva the Destroyer; for truly thou deservedst it! I have seen thy last two letters [to the *Pilot* and the Repeal Association], and sympathise intimately with the feelings that dictated them. . . . I have just glanced at O'Connell's letter. Read it I could not. My disgust overpowered me. 'Pity the sorrows of a poor old man'—'whose trembling' soul 'has driven him to' retract his own sentiments and accuse his country's—" &c.

An English poet entitled to speak for his class, if not for his race, addressed a prophetic couplet to Meagher :—

"Unbought, unsold, unstained, undoubted man,
Stand fast—take breath—time shows who Will and Can."

And De Jean Fraser, a Protestant artizan, whom nature had made a poet and fortune a struggling tradesman, exhorted the defeated party to remember that the gloom of the hour was as temporary as the moment when a revolving light turns its darker side to the spectators.*

* The *Warder*, conducted by a young man of genius, naturally sympathised with the Young Irelanders; but it probably represented the *consensus*

The English press and politicians intervened actively in the contest. The scorn and misrepresentation with which they had long pursued O'Connell were now transferred to the *Nation* and the Young Irelanders. We were assailed on the platform, in parliament, and still more effectively with pen and pencil. Mr. Thackeray, a man of intellect and letters, had no sympathy with other men of letters striving for intellectual freedom. He had specified Thomas Davis, in his day, as a fitting successor for Marat; and he now ridiculed Davis's friends, in piquant prose and stinging verse, for the pusillanimity with which (as he predicted) they would shrink from turning their words into deeds. Being the most sensitive of mortals when his personal characteristics were described, he thought himself entitled to name us, one after another, with some ironical or disparaging epithet tacked to the name. It was charming sport; only if we had retaliated by describing our censor, in the language of Grattan, as a

of opinion on the subject among Protestants of national sentiments. "It remains to be seen," the editor wrote, "however, whether the Repeal party is worthy of an organ of sterling genius and integrity. If the *Nation* is crushed, it is clear there exists not a particle of independence in Popish Ireland. . . . The *Nation*—for four years the people's idol—will, at O'Connell's beck, be crushed and trampled by the selfsame people. The slave apes the caprice of the tyrant—

Dum jacet in ripa, calcemus Cæsaris hostem.

The Sejanus of the *Nation* has yet, we apprehend, to learn a lesson in the value of Irish popularity. He, nevertheless, fights his ground, inch by inch—or rather he stands unflinchingly—without yielding his position or dreaming of surrender, under the converging artillery of the O'Connells, O'Higgins, MacHales, and Brodericks. There is all the manliness and self-devotion of genuine enthusiasm in the desperate stand he resolutely maintains. With all their errors and mischief to answer for, the Young Ireland party carry with them the sympathies even of those who hate Repeal—who denounce alike the means it employs and the end it proposes."

Cockney cynic, "with broken beak and cadaverous aspect," there would have been awful bellowing in the Garrick Club. A facetious bishop of the Irish Establishment, looking down from the serene asylum of his sinecure, intervened on the same side. Surveying the parties, he gave a sarcastic and somewhat contemptuous preference to the old leader:—

> "I do not care a straw for Young Ireland or Old Ireland,
> But as between the two, I rather like old Dan;
> And I wish the *Nation* would let the agitation
> Die a humbug, as it first began."*

* In 1861, after he returned from Van Dieman's Land, Smith O'Brien wrote a pamphlet on Irish affairs which contained a rapid survey of the rise and fall of the Repeal agitation; of this period he says: "In an unhappy hour these intrigues were successful —a practical, though not an avowed compromise of the demand for Repeal was secured by the Whigs in 1846, even as it had been realised in 1835. The unopposed re-election of Mr. Shiel for Dungarvan was the first fruit of this compromise; the expulsion of the Young Ireland party from the Repeal Association was the second result. The Irish people were taught to look for beneficent legislation to the British parliament, . . . and to seek a large share of local and imperial patronage." He was persuaded, to the end of his life, that the will of the Irish nation would have prevailed but for this compact with the Whigs. "I have no hesitation in stating it to be my sincere conviction, that if in 1846 the Repealers had steadfastly resisted the temptations set before them, and had adhered to the vow of 1845, we should at this moment have been in the enjoyment of an Irish legislature without having gone beyond the limits of legal and constitutional agitation."

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

I. Controversy with the "Pilot."

The effect of the two or three decisive exposures of the *Pilot*, to which we were driven by imperative necessity, was the greater that I positively refused to engage in habitual controversy with such an adversary, even at the vehement request and remonstrances of Dillon. A little earlier he wrote to me from the country:—

"I sent an article by yesterday's post in answer to the *Pilot*. You know my notions on this from of old. I think it a great mistake to suffer yourself to be attacked by this scoundrel without defending yourself. The most outrageous lies will be believed if they are constantly repeated with-

out contradiction; and I really believe that if this infidelity howl had been promptly and boldly met in the commencement, and the hypocrisy of its vile authors exposed, the *Nation* and the cause would be greatly the better of it. . . . These are my views. It will be for you to say whether they are right, and whether, all circumstances considered, it is prudent to insert the article. I think I forgot to add a heading. Would 'Titus Oates' be a good one? If that won't do, you must invent one." I cited, in reply, the saying of a fine old veteran of our acquaintance, who spoke in parables—"If a dog be set on to bark at me," he said, "I never fight the dog; I fight the dog's owner." Pigot was of a widely-different opinion from Dillon. "I am half afraid," he wrote to me, "of your hot intolerance of scoundrelism; but remember, the only legitimate dealing with such a specimen is hanging it up. Depend on public sense about your (and the *Nation's*) character. 'Twill keep you right, and gentlemen will respect your moderation."

II. Mr. John O'Connell and the Secession.

A startling confirmation of the public verdict against Mr. John O'Connell, as the mischief-maker, came to me by a curious accident. In the session of '54, one night in the House of Commons, Maurice O'Connell, with whom I had ordinarily little or no communication, crossed the floor and sat down by me. He had long wished, he said, to correct a misapprehension which he believed existed in my mind, that he had been a party to the disastrous quarrel between his father and the Young Irelanders. On the contrary, he had strongly opposed it, and never crossed the threshold of Conciliation Hall after it happened while his father lived. John had done it all. His own influence with his father had also been undermined in his old age (as I understood, by the same person). I was so surprised and puzzled by this unexpected confidence, that I excused myself on the ground that I had an appointment with some friends. While I was sitting, immediately after, in the tea-room with Dr. Brady, member for Leitrim, and Mr. Swift, member for Sligo, Mr. O'Connell came in, sat down at the table with us, and repeated in their presence all that he had been saying to me privately. He urged me to visit him at Darrynane in the autumn, and, as an inducement, promised to show me documents confirming his statement. He asked Dr. Brady to accompany me, and persisted in representing his complete severance in policy from his brother to an extent that was embarrassing. The conversation was fixed in the memory of all of us by the tragic circumstance that Mr. O'Connell died that night.

The Young Liberator will scarcely be understood without a specimen of the frank and ingenuous criticism by which he supported his case in the Secession debate. T. D. Reilly had written (in vindication of a more vigorous national policy) this sentence:—"'Wonderful,' quoth Bacon, 'is the case of boldness in civil business. What first? Boldness. What second and third? Boldness!' 'What needs there to conquer?' shouted Danton, 'audacity, still audacity, and always audacity!'" Whereupon Mr. John discoursed to this effect:—"They quote the miscreant Danton of the French Revolution—that bloody and remorseless wretch—to tell us that we should go on faster than Daniel O'Connell thinks advisable. We have O'Connell on one side, and on the other Danton, the bloody French revolutionist, who presided at the massacre not only of the aristocracy, but of thousands of the humble people; for after the guillotine had cut off

numbers of the aristocracy, it was made to do its work on the poor people, men as well as women. Danton, who presided over the bloodiest scenes of the French Revolution, is quoted as an authority that we may follow the same course, and go through the same career of misery, crime, and blood! But we will not. Morality, religion, and constitution, are our watchwords, and we will stand by them. These are the landmarks by which we will steer our course, and while we do so we are sure we never will go wrong. We will not accept the individuals of the *Nation* to be our schoolmasters."

It is inconceivable why Mr. John did not hold the Young Irelanders responsible for the opinions of the other personage cited by Reilly. "They quote Lord Bacon," he might have said, "for the purpose of turning into contempt O'Connell's reliance on a simple, pious, uneducated people! Bacon, who planned the shameful confiscation of Ulster, Bacon the infamous judge, who sold justice as unblushingly as a Jew sells cast clothes; Bacon, who delivered up his best friend to the gallows! Does the *Nation* wish the Irish people to betray their best friends in the same fashion?'

Book II.

CHAPTER I.

THE REACTION.

After six weeks of steady, and, as it seemed, successful work, O'Connell retired to Darrynane for a holiday, leaving his son in command. It was a rash experiment. The elderly young man was more arbitrary and dictatorial than his father; and those who would endure wrongs in silence from the venerable tribune, loathed the arrogant imbecility of his son. The reaction had already begun before O'Connell retired, but respect for his authority kept it within bounds; and though he was broken in health and fretted by unexpected opposition, he was too wise to strike heavy blows except against opponents whom he had determined to crush; he did not wantonly outrage humble or isolated persons, and turn tepid friends into passionate enemies. But the vice-tribune was intoxicated with success, and put no rein on his temper. He struck right and left, high and low, at all who stopped short of absolute submission to his authority.

The state of the country, at the moment, made men unusually impatient of folly. The immediate future

became more and more menacing. Two facts of fatal significance had by this time become certain. More than a third of the potato crop throughout the island was gone, in some districts more than half; and at the same time the bulk of the remaining supplies, cattle and corn, butter, beef, and pork, which would have fed all the inhabitants, continued to be exported to England, to pay the rent of farms which no longer yielded the cultivators their ordinary food. Deaths from starvation were reported from North and South, and the actual nature of the danger when the food of a country is withdrawn began to be dimly foreseen.* It was essentially a remediable calamity, for, as Berkeley had taught of old, if the island was fenced off from the rest of the world by a wall of brass it produced food enough to support its population. Measures of precaution were again urged on the Government. They were besought to purchase corn and establish granaries as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland had done. But Lord John Russell replied that he would not interfere with private enterprise or disturb the ordinary course of trade. Private enterprise meant the interest of corn merchants and shipowners in London and Liverpool, who were destined to make fortunes by the famine. Some inventive person suggested that maize, which men and animals consume in America, was nearly unknown in

* Ulster was believed in England to be safe in consequence of its prosperity and its Protestantism which in Ireland had long been a passport to social security. But later, when statistics were available, it was found that in some of the Northern Unions the number of Protestant paupers exceeded the number of Catholics, and in others equalled or nearly equalled them.

the English market, and might be purchased without danger to existing interests. When this policy became known prices immediately rose, and continued to rise till Indian corn, which at the beginning of the season was worth thirty shillings a quarter in the port of London, brought three pounds. But when it was thirty shillings in London it could be bought under half that price at New Orleans; the balance being the cost of carriage. The Government were urged to employ the Navy in this service and save the freight; every pound so saved being a pound set free to purchase food. But the carrying trade was strong in votes, and ships of war were declared, on official authority, to be quite unfit for this service. The falseness of this pretence was not universally understood at the moment, but before many months had elapsed, two ships of the American Navy anchored in the Liffey, loaded with cargoes of corn, rice, and flour, as a gift from the American people. If they had sent money, the money would have purchased less than one-third of the food which the donors were able to supply by adopting the two methods rejected by the British Government. One of the American ships, the "Macedonian," was a frigate captured by the United States in the last war, and it was naturally asked if it was only when they fell into the hands of an enemy that British ships of war could carry food to Ireland? When the aid of the Navy was refused, freights doubled in the ports of the Black Sea, of the United States, and of England; and during nearly a year half the money contributed, as we shall

presently see, by the benevolent, voted by Parliament, or levied off the country, to relieve the famishing people, went as profits to Mark Lane and the shipping interest. Other practical suggestions were equally disregarded. Sharman Crawford, being himself a man of large estate, recommended a property tax, to be spent on employing the people; Smith O'Brien suggested that railways, docks and canals, and the improvement of the waste lands would constitute national reproductive work. But the established practice at that time, which has not, as far as I know, undergone any substantial change, was to despatch Englishmen to a country of which they knew nothing, and entrust them to determine questions requiring minute knowledge and long experience. The English officials determined that work simply, irrespective of its reproductiveness, was the proper system, and that not railways and canals or transforming the wastes into corn-fields, but a prodigious extension of highways was the legitimate application of the national strength. Half a million of people were soon employed on this basis, and nearly twelve thousand persons paid for overseeing unproductive labour. Serviceable roads were torn up that they might be made anew, and new lines were projected where there was no traffic. Depôts of Indian corn were formed in England, where it was ground and then transmitted to Ireland, and sold to Relief Committees at a moderate price. Skilfully cooked, and with pleasant condiments, Indian corn is transmuted into palatable dishes; but dissolved into stirabout, and served out cold and half-raw to a

people who had neither fire to cook it nor knowledge of the process, it was the most odious mess ever designed for human food. At first the peasantry could not be induced to touch the "yellow meal;" but the pangs of hunger and the example of benevolent persons gradually overcame their prejudice. Relief Committees were appointed in the most distressed districts, and appeals made for public and private assistance. Nearly a hundred thousand pounds were contributed at home and abroad; but voluntary contribution is a system which taxes the benevolent, and allows the hard-hearted, the oppressor, and the absentee to escape. Meantime the blight grew and spread. Scientific commissions appointed by the Government recommended methods of storage and other precautions to save the potato, but they proved quite useless. The export of food continued, and some of the gentry were not content with the whole produce of the farm without the farm itself. Thirty thousand ejectments were served affecting the residence of nearly a hundred and fifty thousand souls,* with what result we shall see later.

The factions of Jerusalem struggling for the upper hand at an hour when the catapults of Titus were beating down the gates, furnish a stock example of national folly; but Ireland, it was plain, was about to encounter a worse calamity than siege or sack, and the appointed leader of the people was still busy inciting one division of his forces against another. It is due to O'Connell,

* Par. Pap. cited by Mr. Sharman Crawford in the House of Commons.

and still more to his antagonists, to recognise the fact that in this conjuncture he altogether wanted the faculties necessary to the office he held. His strong will, in the touching language of the Eastern proverb, was "as a bow whose string had been slit in two;" he was passive in the hands of his son, and his suggestions, when he made suggestions, were disregarded by the Government he had raised to power. He must have known that the long devotion of the people to himself hardened the heart of England to their distress. "The monster meetings (says Peel, in a private memorandum, a little earlier), the ungrateful return for past kindness, the subscriptions to the Repeal rent and the O'Connell tribute, will disincline the charitable here to make any great exertion for Irish relief." It is impossible to doubt that he suffered agonies of remorse and shame when he found himself powerless to protect the people, but he continued to support the Government who sacrificed them to the greed of British traders, and continued to assail those who had forewarned him of his error. It accords with all we know of the cold nature of Lord John Russell to suppose that he said in words, as he said in action, "Let O'Connell have his mess of patronage, but he shall have nothing else he asks in Ireland."

The *Nation* still insisted that the one remedy was that which the rest of Europe had adopted, which even the parliaments of the Pale had adopted in periods of distress—to retain in the country the food raised by the people till the people were fed.

"Weary men, what reap ye? Golden corn for the stranger.
What sow ye? Human corses that wait for the avenger.
Fainting forms, hunger-stricken, what see you in the offing?
Stately ships to bear our food away, amid the stranger's scoffing.
There's a proud array of soldiers—what do they round your door?
They guard our master's granaries from the thin hands of the poor.
Pale mothers, wherefore weeping? 'Would to God that we were dead—
Our children swoon before us, and we cannot give them bread.'"*

But Conciliation Hall taught another lesson—there was nobody to blame; the Government was the best of governments, and the landlords were conducting themselves meritoriously.†

Mr. Butt, who was at this time a Professor of Political Economy at the Dublin University, took the other side of the controversy decisively. He published two lectures of his course, in which he insisted that in the contemplation of the moralist or economist there can be no such thing as surplus product in a country till the wants of all classes are supplied. An export trade was no necessary evidence of prosperity. It was the process by which a country parts with its wealth. A nation of slaves toiling under the lash for the benefit of task-masters in another country would have their harbours crowded with vessels engaged in an export

* Speranza.

† "As a general rule no one can find fault with the conduct of the Irish landlords since the awful calamity came upon us."—*O'Connell in Conciliation Hall, January 11th*, 1847.

trade. A writer in the *Nation* suggested that there was a higher authority than even political science for this opinion. The remedy which Moses, inspired by heaven, proposed in such a peril was to gather the corn into granaries from which it might be distributed to the people when the scarcity came. But Conciliation Hall had more urgent work to do than to encounter the famine. It had to denounce the treachery of Young Ireland, and expose its malevolent designs.

The fall of O'Connell from an authority among his race like that of the Patriarchs among theirs, will not be understood except on condition of mastering a hundred trivial details, which exhibit and explain the gradual alienation of the people. For a moment it seemed that Celtic Ireland had lodged its proxy in his hands alone, to be used at his unquestioned discretion. The Catholic clergy seconded him so universally that it needed unusual courage and individuality in a priest to take the other side.* The educated and easy class, especially the landed gentry, and the prosperous traders who had invested in land, the men who desired to get into parliament without pledges, that they might speculate in the lottery of party politics, and, in a lower scale, those to whom the office of magistrate or grand juror was something to covet, or who hoped for a crumb of patronage, applauded it in as large a proportion. The shopkeepers,

* The names of the Catholic clergymen who took a public part with the Young Irelanders from the beginning will be found in a note at the end of the chapter. At a later period they were too numerous to record.

who were no better and no worse than the bourgeoisie of other countries, soon discerned that to enjoy a quiet life they must go with the priests and the gentry. But that section of a nation which thinks for itself and, in the end, draws the majority in its train, held aloof and waited. The leaders of the professions, the provinces, were in a large proportion Repealers, and among them no notable man adhered to the new policy. The young men reared in towns, of whatever rank, and an exceptional few reared in farm-houses and villages, were disturbed and angry; and in the breast of the democracy strange emotions were at work. Though it was still imperfectly known, even to themselves, a wide and fundamental change had been silently wrought in the new generation. England, between the rise of Laud and the rise of Cromwell, or France, between the apotheosis of Louis XIV. and the execution of Louis XVI., had not more completely changed its habit of thought, or mode of regarding political problems, than the young men of Ireland between the establishment of the *Nation* and the rupture with Conciliation Hall. When O'Connell began his career he found the people cowed by slavery, and degraded by the devices of which slavery is the inevitable parent. But not in vain had Davis and his friends striven to create public opinion and make it racy of the soil. A generation had grown from youth to manhood who had been taught to cherish scrupulous veracity and unselfishness, and to whom it was a moral impossibility to be dupes or mutes. There were guiding truths,

which they saw as plainly as men see lights in the sky, and which they could not deny without dishonour. They felt deference and affection for their leader, but a profounder allegiance to justice and truth. The division of the country which finally took place was substantially a separation of those who owed their political education chiefly to O'Connell from those who owed it chiefly to the *Nation*. The Secession was a great calamity, but, like many evils, it was tempered by an unforeseen good. It increased the intelligence, alacrity, and self-reliance of the section of the people who sustained it. The discipline made them better citizens, and fitter to engage in all the occupations of civilised life. And their remote descendants may be proud to inherit the blood of men who vindicated personal integrity and free opinions against such formidable odds.

The first note of resistance came from Cork, which was not merely the second city in the island, but incontestably more national in spirit and in character than Dublin. At a meeting at one of the Repeal reading-rooms a letter was read from Mr. Ray, announcing that for the future the *Weekly Register* would be forwarded to the room in lieu of the *Nation*. Mr. Brady, an apothecary, an intelligent and cultivated man, who held at the moment the office of Vice-President of the local Repeal organization, called attention to a curious fact: the *Register* had already been substituted for the condemned journal a week before the change had been authorised by the Association. Would the Repealers of Cork, he enquired, sanction the practice of inflicting

punishment before sentence was pronounced? Connecting this fact with the disgraceful compromise at Dungarvan, he was convinced that the *Nation* was condemned, not for any speculative opinions on physical force, but because, like a faithful watchman, it sounded alarm when Mr. O'Connell was reported to have declared that all he wanted was a real Union. New regulations were framed to expel, not only the Young Irelanders, but a man only second to O'Connell himself in the love and confidence of the people. Most of his audience knew that when Smith O'Brien was in an English prison, Captain Broderick, of Conciliation Hall, wrote privately to the Mayor to suppress any demonstration of sympathy in Cork. And now, from the mitred prelate down to the lowest hireling in the Association, there was a clamour of infidelity raised against the *Nation*. He was a Catholic and would lay down his life for his religion, but he denied that the *Nation* had, directly or indirectly, committed the offence imputed to it. He invited the meeting to declare that they respected the honest and uncompromising principles of that journal, and would not receive any other in place of it. If the Association would not supply the *Nation*, let the drawback, to which they were entitled, be returned, and they would provide a paper for themselves. In a city where O'Connell had long ruled, like a patriarch among the children of Israel, Mr. Brady's resolution was adopted with only two dissentients. His simple and masculine exposition of the truth was reiterated from time to time, in more polished or poignant phrases

by other remonstrants, but it is the first blow like the first step, "*qui coute.*"

Limerick, the second city of Munster, was the next to move. Dr. William Griffin, a medical man in large practice, but still more notable as brother of Gerald Griffin, author of "The Collegians," gave notice in the Town Council of a series of resolutions on the subject. They declared that O'Brien and the other Seceders were faithful to the original rules of the Association; that up to the introduction of the Peace Resolutions no one supposed these rules involved an abstract declaration applicable to all times, circumstances, and countries; and finally that the treatment of Mr. John Martin, and the interdiction of the *Nation*, tended to deter Protestants from joining the Association and to induce earnest Catholics to withdraw from it. O'Brien, who still believed a reconciliation possible, entreated Dr. Griffin not to press resolutions which might further divide Repealers, and they were finally withdrawn. But, though he silenced the corporation, his constituents were determined to be heard. It was at first agreed to send a deputation to Cahirmoyle, to express continued confidence in their representative; but the people insisted on sharing in the movement. A procession three-quarters of a mile in length started from Rathkeale and a similar one from Newcastle, headed by bands and banners, and accompanied by a number of the clergy and local professional men.* Their

* Rev. Mr. Mulcachy, Newcastle; Rev. Daniel Synan, Rathkeale; and Rev. Mr. Leahy, Adare, took a leading part in the proceedings.

addresses and resolutions declared that free discussion was the basis of moral force, and expressed an ardent desire that a reconciliation might be effected. O'Brien's reply was characteristic. In justifying himself modestly, he took occasion to state his opinion on the constitutional question with a force and plainness which he could not but know would be misrepresented; but it was a necessary sacrifice to his self-respect. He had joined the Association, he said, with the hope of combining Irishmen of every creed and class, and of all political opinions, pledged to no other principle than that the prosperity of Ireland was to be accomplished by a Repeal of the Union obtained through peaceful means. Till the Whig Ministry was about to be formed no insuperable difference arose; at that time some of the most able and disinterested members declared against Repealers making any sort of concession to the Whigs, and, above all, against their soliciting or accepting patronage from them; and they insisted that Dungarvan had betrayed its duty in not electing a Repealer, instead of Mr. Sheil. This was the real ground of difference. In this discussion he did not hear one word of physical force; but, unhappily, it was afterwards thought right to require these gentlemen to affirm that there were no circumstances, or any time, when the use of arms was justifiable. To this pledge they would not subscribe; but they declared it was not their intention to invite their countrymen to appeal to arms; and there could be no doubt that to do so would be disastrous to Repeal. At the same time he would say that if the

whole Irish people were united on the question, and England, in reply to their claims, should endeavour to put down the expression of public opinion, resistance would be not only lawful, but necessary. He had nothing to gain and everything to lose by a social revolution, but because he would not subscribe to this test, he was arraigned as a rebel; and he had left Conciliation Hall and returned to his family and neighbours. He had no desire to set up a leadership; he would have been proud to be associated with the chosen leader of the people as a follower, but not as a slave. Whenever he found free discussion allowed, and the *Nation* and the men who thought with it welcomed back, instead of being driven out with ignominy for endeavouring to serve their country in an open and disinterested way, he would return. It may be safely affirmed that when this speech was made there was not a man in the British dominions who anticipated the possibility of heading an insurrection in his own person less than Smith O'Brien. Among the motives which finally launched him in that perilous career, reaction against the shameful and impossible doctrine of the Peace Resolutions counted for something.

Drogheda, Templederry, Rathkeale, Rosbercon, Ballaghaderin, and other districts refused to expel the *Nation* from their reading-rooms, and some demanded back the Repeal rent they had subscribed, as one of the implied conditions of the subscription was now evaded. In England, where the Repealers were freer from local control, the resistance spread rapidly. In Manchester a

meeting of wardens and members, amounting to two hundred persons, sent a remonstrance to the Association, declaring their deep gratitude to O'Connell for his long services, but their disapproval of the policy which produced the Secession. In Stallybridge the Repealers declared that the new test was no better than the Big Endian and Little Endian controversy in Lilliput, and that the teaching of the *Nation* had created gratitude to the teachers in every clime where Irishmen were to be found. In Liverpool a considerable section of the party, a doctor in good practice being the chairman, reminded the Association that in a national confederacy there ought to be more freedom of debate, and that a body struggling for liberty ought not to invade the independence of the press, as had been done in the case of a journal which next, after O'Connell, had been the most powerful agent in awakening the people and inspiring the national movement with a tone of loftiness and dignity. They differed from the *Nation* in many of its opinions; they wanted no other leader than O'Connell, but they anxiously desired to see Smith O'Brien and the youthful energy and ability of the country by the leader's side. In London a conference of wardens was called, of whom forty-five attended, representing the bulk of the London Irish, and they declared unanimously for the Seceders. A warden,* who had sent £250 from the Irish workmen in Chelsea to the Repeal rent, and a considerable contribution to the O'Connell tribute, said O'Connell had done much for Ireland, but

* Mr. Wm. O'Leary.

Ireland had also done much for O'Connell, and he could not repress his indignation that after the enormous sum contributed it was now admitted that the treasury was empty. Another warden * entreated Mr. O'Connell to take counsel with reasonable men instead of allowing his mind to be biassed by mercenary patriots and moon-struck Pacificators. The Repealers of Dundee, by their warden, declared that they could restrain their indignation no longer when they found the Irish leader arraigning the *Nation* for High Treason, on the evidence of the English Prime Minister; a proceeding which amounted to a reversal of the uniform teaching of his life. The mass of the Repealers in Leeds agreed to resolutions declaring their strict adherence to a peaceful policy, their conviction that the establishment of a new test was unjust and impolitic, their pain at witnessing the arbitrary conduct of certain Repeal leaders, their approval of the generous forbearance exhibited by Smith O'Brien and the other members, in whose person the right of free discussion had been invaded, and their warm admiration of the course the *Nation* had pursued from the commencement. They called on the old and tried leader of the Irish people to propose a reconciliation to which all could conscientiously agree. The resolutions were forwarded by Mr. Edward Hayes, a young stockbroker, since known as editor of a valuable collection of Irish Ballads. Mr. Ray, in reply, desired to have the names of the persons who had adopted the resolutions, that they might be struck off the books.

* Mr. Wm. Dunne.

Mr. Hayes rejoined that they were too numerous to collect without more trouble than he was disposed to take for the pleasure of a committee, reduced to a handful of persons, living for the most part on money subscribed by the Irish people to promote a Repeal of the Union; but if Mr. Ray desired the names of the Repealers who did not agree with the resolutions they could be furnished without inconvenience. These were dangerous truths to be spoken by steadfast Repealers, but Mr. John O'Connell thought himself justified in limiting the danger by causing them all to be suppressed. He laid down the rule nakedly that to read remonstrances or resignations would only gratify the "miserable vanity" of persons who were, in fact, "the bitterest enemies of the prosperity and independence of Ireland."

This new practice was sometimes brought to a stringent test. James Haughton was a prosperous merchant, a zealous philanthropist, and a leading Nonconformist. When he declared himself a Repealer, it was regarded as a signal gain. He was probably the only man in Ireland, not a Quaker, who believed that war was not in any case lawful. But, though he loved peace, he did not love that compulsory peace which is another name for slavery. He wrote to the committee declaring that the expulsion of the Young Irelanders was calculated to destroy all hope of a Repeal of the Union, and to strike a dangerous blow at true freedom and personal independence in the community. He entirely disapproved of their warlike tone, but there

was a manliness in the men and independence in the journal which must command respect; and he did not think the Old Irelanders were so free from blame on the same score in the past as to warrant them in visiting their opponents with severe censure. The late hasty decision should be expunged from the records, and the Seceders told that, as long as they adhered to the fundamental rules of the Association, they should be welcomed to its deliberations.

This advice Mr. Haughton plainly expected would be submitted to the Association; and no case can well be conceived in which a remonstrance would be better entitled to be heard. The Peace Resolutions altered the basis on which the members of the Repeal Association had confederated; they were passed in the committee and afterwards passed in the public meeting at a rush, and without the ordinary and legitimate notice; and they were carried in both places by a majority carefully recruited for the special purpose. If men, whose character and contributions went to create the confederacy, were ever entitled to be heard, this was the time. But Mr. Ray informed Mr. Haughton that the committee could not re-open a question which had been determined after a lengthened debate. Mr. Haughton replied that he was not aware that the question had been debated, though he saw, from the action of the Association, it had been decided; and, as it was attempted to crush opponents without any adequate justification, he resigned all connection with the body. On the same day Mr. John Thomas Lloyd took a simi-

lar course. Mr. Lloyd was one of the resident gentry of Limerick, and when he joined O'Connell declared he was the most important recruit since Smith O'Brien.

Individual members had been silenced, to punish their miserable vanity; the remonstrances of public meetings soon came to be treated in the same manner. From Kenmare, in O'Connell's native county, twenty Repealers sent their subscriptions with an intimation that they were all believers in moral force and relied on no other agency for attaining Repeal, but they could not make a general denunciation of other means, "in all circumstances, for all time, and in all countries." No notice of their letter was taken in the Hall, but, after three weeks' delay, Mr. Ray informed them that the Association could not receive subscriptions from "persons who contemplated the use of physical force." The Repealers of Ballaghaderin, in an address to the committee, reminded them that the moderation which the *Nation* exhibited, under great provocation, was an assurance of its deep attachment to the national cause, and presented a creditable contrast to the conduct of papers favoured by the Association. It was a sad sight, they said, to see the illustrious leader of the people exerting his great intellect to fasten the crime of High Treason on a man who stood by his side in the day of peril and had shared his imprisonment, and in ridiculous attempts to represent Smith O'Brien as a physical force revolutionist. Many might be silent through the gratitude which all felt towards O'Connell, but the country would not sustain injustice;

a country, indeed, which ceased to love and cherish those who devoted themselves to her service, might be safely pronounced lost beyond all hope. Mr. Ray returned the address, as calumnious and insulting. At the same time fifty burgesses of Cork, who shared the sentiments to which Mr. Brady had given expression, sent a joint remonstrance to the Association. It was silently suppressed.

Against this system of suppression the *Nation* protested: It reminded the country that the Union was not carried by more shameless practices; it was so Castlereagh and Cooke had put their thumbs on the throat of dissent; that the right to differ was of the very essence of liberty and the foundation of all secular truth, for without it there could be no inquiry. If the State denied it as despotically as it was denied in Conciliation Hall, Irishmen could not profess themselves Repealers or even Catholics. The managing committee intrusted with the money and interest of the people had no more right to silence remonstrance and inquiry from those whom they represented, than the directors of a bank or a railway company. But, above all, how fatal was such conduct to the hope of getting independent men to set up a parliament where they might fear similar foul play would be practised. It had become of infinite public importance that it should be resisted and reversed without delay.

Mr. John O'Connell was of a different opinion. Instead of retreating, he advanced triumphantly. The names of members who resigned had in the first instance

been submitted to the Association, though their letters of complaint were suppressed. But, by a new order, Mr. Ray was authorised to strike them off the books, by his own authority, without troubling the Association with the business. As Mr. Ray and the committee were other names for Mr. John O'Connell, the new leader was now as supreme in Conciliation Hall as Robespierre in the Convention. But the body of Repealers throughout the country were becoming desperate, and their remonstrances poured into the *Nation* office.

The front bench of a parliamentary opposition contains the most considerate opponents of a government; the men who do not ordinarily assail their motives or wound their self-respect. The Seceders, who had long been the associates of their present assailants, and might some day become their successors, practised a similar forbearance. In the first instance, the letters of angry members were not published in the *Nation*.* But when the suppression in Conciliation Hall became insolent and agressive, it was impossible to continue this practice. Resistance first came in a driblet; after this last stroke, it swelled to a stream; in the end, it became a torrent, boiling and surging with popular passion. That no one may be entitled to say the Irish people were precipitate

* "From each of the four provinces we have received copies of letters addressed to the Association by clergymen, inspectors of Repeal Wardens, collectors of Repeal rent, &c., some of them bitter and sarcastic, some expostulatory and remonstrant, but all, we find, carefully suppressed at Conciliation Hall, where no indication of public opinion is welcome which does not precisely suit the present remarkable policy of the Association. We are keeping a collection of these documents."—*Nation.*

or fickle, in the course they finally took, it becomes necessary to epitomise a few of the early remonstrances. They will show how many warnings were uttered in vain, and how provocations continued to be showered upon all objectors, till they grew past human endurance.

Mr. Robert Orr, one of the few Protestant gentry of considerable possessions who had joined the movement, said, "I am still an ardent Repealer, but I cannot remain in an Association which has become a normal school for place-hunters."

Mr. Edward Murray, second son of Sir James Murray, reminded the committee that he had paid his subscription regularly, and broken no rule of the Association, but as he could not agree with the recent proceedings, he assumed that the leader would cause him to be informed that he had "virtually ceased to be a member." This practice was legally and morally indefensible. Mr. O'Connell might be the committee, the auditor, and the treasurer, but he was not the Association. He had been its trusted leader, but if he changed from Repeal to Federalism, and from Federalism to Whiggery, the members were obliged to follow him, or otherwise to be expelled. Was this the way to conciliate Protestants? Was this the way to show England our capacity for freedom?

Mr. George Smyth, the treasurer of the Liverpool Repealers, had been covered with votes of thanks by the Association, for his remittances were as regular as the tides. He now laid down his office. He was still, he declared, a Repealer, and O'Connell was the leader he desired to see at the head of the movement; but as the Association had changed its rules, its policy, its principles, and its constitution, he considered himself no longer a member. He agreed, indeed, with the resolutions adopted by the Bishop and clergy of Derry, but Mr. Mitchel, who expressly declared his concurrence in them, was told he was excluded. Nor could he concur in the ukase against the *Nation*. Its writers had created a new literature; had made the people familiar with the history of their country; had taught them the value of self-reliance and self-respect, and were more hated by the enemies of Ireland than O'Connell himself. Had the new policy increased the power of the Association? Had it increased the rent? Had it drawn in the Protestant gentry, who were said to be alarmed by the Young Irelanders? Had it obtained any result, except situations for a few followers?

The treasurer of the Mayo Independent Club,* wrote to say that as he could not approve of a place-hunting policy, he took his side with the men whom, he believed, were actuated by the honourable desire to raise their country to the rank of a nation.

Mr. John Harkan, a barrister, and member of the committee, directed that his name might be removed from the roll of members. He never advocated physical force in or out of the Association, nor did he approve of it, but he had a strong aversion to foul play and false pretences; and he was convinced that the gentlemen who were driven from Conciliation

* Mr. Henry Murphy.

Hall endeavoured to the utmost of their power to avert the calamitous discussion to which the cause had been sacrificed.

John Dillon was still an invalid, and his family kept him in the country. They persuaded him to remain silent for a time; but he was angry with the moral indignation, which is the sure accompaniment of a powerful understanding united with a humane heart, and at length he broke loose. Lest his absence should be misapprehended, he desired to disconnect himself publicly from proceedings in Conciliation Hall, which he regarded as disgraceful. The Association, like the senate of the later Empire, only met to register the capricious edicts of a despot.

Mr. Daly, a notable warden in London, in resigning his functions declared that the *Nation* made a better man of every one who habitually read it. Mr. O'Connell now asked, Was not Smith O'Brien laughed at in the House of Commons? Was the Pole applauded in Russia? Had not some of the most distinguished Irishmen been pelted in the streets of London?

Mr. Hughes, C.E., insisted on his right as a member to protest against the practice of setting up persons whose hands were eternally in the pockets of the people to assail the most fearless and disinterested advocates of Irish liberty.

Mr. O'Byrne, of Newry, since honourably known in connection with the *Tablet* in Ireland, and the publishing house of James Duffy and Sons, informed Mr. Ray that a majority of the Repealers in Newry objected to trampling out free discussion in the case of Smith O'Brien and the Young Irelanders, and to the despotic attempt to destroy a brilliant and unpurchasable journal, in the interest of the Whigs. From private communication with some thousands of Repealers in Ulster, he was able to state that not three of them approved altogether of Mr. O'Connell's recent policy. They seceded silently, and the result would be seen in the woeful deficiency in the Repeal rent, unless he speedily threw away the flag of buff and blue, and hoisted the green and orange banner of nationality. Under the circumstances, he could not continue a member. Mr. John O'Connell graciously assured him that he was a person they were glad to get rid of.

Dr. McBurney, of Belfast, declared that he dissented from some of the exciting articles in the *Nation*, as he had dissented from some of the exciting speeches of O'Connell, and others, who now assailed it; but he admired its ability, its straightforwardness, and its freedom from sectarianism, and as he could not support its exclusion from the reading-rooms, he retired.

Mr. Dudley, of Alexandra, believed the *Nation* was to be sacrificed to the Whig alliance, and in order that the audit of the people's money—exceeding £230,000—often promised, but never fulfilled, might be permanently evaded, and he could no longer continue a member.

Mr. Lindsey, Check Castle, Denbighshire, a member of the committee, affirmed that the Dungarvan election was a base compromise of principle, and the Peace Resolutions a paltry pretence to get rid of independent members. And Mr. Murphy, of Liverpool, refused to continue a member because it was plain to him that O'Connell had made a treaty with the Whigs, and that he could only fulfil it by getting rid of Smith O'Brien and the Young Irelanders.

Mr. P. J. Smyth* asked, if the Peace Resolutions were brought

* The present Member for Tipperary.

forward for the safety of the Association, how it happened that some individual member who had used language justifying such a precaution, had not been made personally responsible, and expelled? But no dangerous language had been, or could be, cited. The *Nation* was said to imperil the Association. It was more fatally imperilled in character and influence by its patronage of the journal which had slandered the Archbishop of Armagh, against which no word was ever uttered in Conciliation Hall. Four months since Mr. O'Connell pronounced a striking eulogy on Smith O'Brien. The future historian would ask what atrocious crimes had he since committed, to subject him to the supersedeas of Mr. Ray.*

Dr. Coppinger Cove, of Cork, declared that he had always been an ardent O'Connellite. He was still an O'Connellite of 1843, 1844, and 1845, but an O'Connellite of 1846 he never could persuade himself to become.

In Clare the affection for O'Connell was traditional, and it must have been sorely lacerated before a Clare man† wrote:—"The people are starving while Mr. O'Connell is providing places for his family and his friends from the Whig Government. There is no use in hiding the matter, Repeal is almost a dead question."

Mr. Kearney, Irishtown, demanded whether O'Connell had any right to turn a hall built by the money of Repealers into a stronghold of Whiggery. The majority of Dublin Repealers were undoubtedly opposed to his policy.

Mr. R. D. Williams‡ said he had joined the Association with forty of his fellow students in 1843, when "sunbursts". flying from pike-heads were the ornaments of Repeal cards. He had looked for guidance and instruction, and language of prudent valour from that body, but latterly had only found the Leader acting the part of a Crown Prosecutor, and his favourite aide-de-camp declaiming like Bombastes Furioso in *delirium tremens*. The witch in the fable disturbed all nature, and raised the devil to recover her favourite cat, and Mr. O'Connell raised men, money, and prodigious uproar in Ireland, only as it seemed to bring back the Whigs. The dirtiest road in the city was the road from Burgh Quay to Dublin Castle.

There was probably not one of these men who

* Mr. Smyth quoted O'Connell's language, which for once did not overstate O'Brien's actual merits:—"Never forget it; let it never die in your memory; let it never perish in your souls; that the time he joined you was your time of peril. Smith O'Brien came to you in the hour of darkness, and offered himself, at every risk, for the furtherance of your undertaking. . . . In all his labours who was more useful? The Parliamentary Committee is principally indebted to his exertions. The Parliamentary Reports, that are now of such importance, and are making such an impression in England, are almost all his—either his actual writing, or suggested by him, and arranged under his powerful talents. . . . In the entire course of his conduct he has shown a high-minded spirit. He has shrunk from nobody. No power on earth could intimidate him, or drive him from the assertion of that which he is convinced belongs to justice and truth."

† Mr. Flanagan.

‡ The poet "Shamrock."

would not have defended O'Connell's reputation at the risk of his life a few months earlier.

To counteract these spontaneous spurts of opinion, which began to tell on the public mind, Mr. John O'Connell employed the Wardens of the Association, its paid canvassers and its multitudinous correspondence. In many places he was successful in obtaining support, but he failed where failure was disastrous.

In Meath, the Repeal Club at one of its ordinary meetings was suddenly invited to take sides in the controversy. A resolution was proposed expressing unlimited confidence in the Liberator, and thanking Mr. John O'Connell for "the all powerful manner in which he had conducted the discussion" on the day of the Secession. The Club consisted of about thirty members, a third of whom were clergymen, and the resolution was proposed and seconded by a priest. Two laymen* objected. They would willingly declare their confidence in O'Connell and their reliance on moral force, but they could not support the implied censure of Smith O'Brien and the Seceders. They were assured that no censure was intended; on the contrary, the best way to promote reconciliation was for Repealers who were not present at the Secession, to pronounce for moral force. As for the thanks to John O'Connell they would be a solace to the heart of his father, which the Meath Club ought not to refuse, and the proposers could not consent to omit them.† A vigorous and cultivated young priest ‡ objected that no notice of these resolutions had been given in the requisition; absent members would be taken at a disadvantage; and moreover it was clearly not desirable to introduce topics which would add to the existing divisions. The Vicar-General, who was present, was appealed to as a decisive authority. After some modest hesitation he adhered

* Mr. P. Mathews and Mr. Terence Sheridan.
† The proposers were Rev. Mr. McEvoy and Rev. Mr. Lynch.
‡ Rev. P. O'Farrell, C.C., Navan.

to the supporters of the resolution; but the Chairman being also appealed to expressed himself decidedly of the opposite opinion.* In the end the resolution respecting Mr. John O'Connell had to be withdrawn. Repudiating an O'Connell in the Meath Club, a correspondent suggested, was equivalent to denying Calvin in Geneva.

The Repealers of Belfast next began to stir, and the result was awaited with unusual interest, because some of them were Protestants, and several belonged to the cultivated middle class. A crowded meeting, however, separated without coming to any resolution, the supporters and opponents of Conciliation Hall being equally numerous. At an adjourned meeting, where the admission was by ticket and was subject to strict scrutiny, a vote of confidence in O'Connell was obtained by professions of respect for O'Brien, and the absence of all censure on the Young Irelanders.

In Limerick the Richmond Ward Club was summoned to express confidence in the Seceders, but O'Brien again interposed and deprecated any action calculated to widen the existing breach.†

In Cork, where his word had long been law, in Limerick and Meath, his ancient strongholds, even in his native Kerry, there was now a party of opposition more devoted and enthusiastic than the party who adhered to O'Connell. But the capital had not yet spoken. The trades were agitated and angry, the Repeal rent in some metropolitan parishes fell to a few shillings, but they were unwilling to throw off their traditional allegiance. They believed that the Dublin Trades

* Nicholas Boylan, J.P.

† In the very crisis of the contest an address was received from the Repealers of Halifax, Nova Scotia, sympathising with O'Brien in his contest with the House of Commons. His answer was framed in the same spirit of forbearance which influence his advice to Dr. Griffin and the Richmond Ward Club.

Union had induced O'Connell to raise the Repeal flag anew, and that they were in an especial manner guardians of the cause. But every week brought some new affront to members who refused to submit to the dictates of the Young Liberator, and at length their patience became exhausted. A number of Dublin Wardens summoned a meeting to remonstrate with the Association on the fatal errors of its course. As they approached the place of meeting they found it in possession of a mob, headed by Tom Arkins, a stalwart demagogue who, by favour of O'Connell, was sword-bearer of the Dublin Corporation, a member of the Repeal Committee, and official "tailor to the Liberator." This brawny tailor and his adherents effectually barred the way. But things had come to a pass when an impediment only increases the force of the current. The promoters met elsewhere and began the most formidable popular resistance which O'Connell ever encountered in his long career. They drew up a Remonstrance and placed it in course of signature in every part of the city.

The document was framed with great skill and the movement conducted with consummate prudence. The Remonstrance declared that for five years they had continually laboured to strengthen the national organisation, and all that time had yielded it complete confidence and implicit obedience. But they felt compelled to REMONSTRATE against the altered policy recently adopted. A new test of opinion was introduced—a test manifestly not necessary to the safety of the Association,

for the old rules had proved sufficient in the trying crisis of '43-4, but invented apparently as a weapon of expulsion against members who had only exercised their undoubted right in debating (whether *pro* or *con*) subjects submitted for discussion. Freedom of speech had been peremptorily denied in the case of Mr. Meagher and Mr. Martin, and by the arbitrary suppression of the correspondence of individual members. Freedom of the press had been violated in the case of a journal which was the sternest organ of national independence. The general committee had usurped a power never conferred on it—the power of expelling members; and the Remonstrants submitted that it ought to be dissolved, and a new committee appointed on which no one who received a salary or stipend of any kind from the Association would have a place; and that such new committee should expend the funds and publish the accounts of the Association. None of the Young Irelanders interfered with this movement—except McGee, who was its Honorary Secretary, and may be presumed to have framed the Remonstrance,—but they watched it with great interest. Meagher wrote to me:—

"The Remonstrance is splendid; it is, I think, a document full of intelligence and spirit. I am most anxious to see the account of yesterday's meeting in Bolton Street. What capital letters the "Seceders" write—that by Myles Doyle is first-rate. What glorious elements for a new organisation are developing themselves." *

* This is an extract from the letter to which Meagher referred:—"I am not going to write angry words, or to give expression to indignant feelings; but this I will say that the hearts and souls of the tradesmen of

Since the Secession, Repeal had been at a standstill in Cork. The usual monthly meetings were suspended, and the collection of Repeal rent had nearly ceased. At length, after three months of torpor, a meeting was called to consider the cause of this check, and the Peoples' Hall was crowded on platform, area, and galleries. The chair was taken by Richard Dowden, a Unitarian gentleman, who held in Cork somewhat the same position as James Haughton in Dublin. He had been Mayor of the city, was a man of vigorous sense and generous philanthropy, and exercised a wide influence, especially on educational and industrial movements.

Mr. Varian,† a Protestant Dissenter, of Huguenot family, and a man of thought and energy, moved a resolution expressing unqualified disapprobation of the late conduct of the Association, and exhorting the committee to retrace their steps and recall

Dublin are with you. I belong to that class myself, and the position which I hold brings me in contact with hundreds of them in society and elsewhere, and I find that the cruel and arbitrary policy now pursued in Conciliation Hall fills their minds with the deepest indignation. They are determined to withdraw all confidence from the men who are endeavouring, without a just or reasonable cause, to crush the most powerful organ of public opinion in this country. . . . There are young men in my sphere of life who, when the *Nation* commenced, could scarcely read a paragraph in it—who were illiterate, in the strictest sense of the word. Their souls caught the fire which burned through its pages. They set themselves to work, and the result is they are now reading Greek and Latin lessons. Will such service as that be forgotten? Never. . . . You have appealed to public opinion to say that you are guiltless. That tribunal has already decided in your favour, and God will ratify the decision. Go on, therefore, in your noble course; make no personal attack upon any man; defend yourselves in your own way, and as sure as God lives your cause will succeed."

† "Varian, of Cork, is an industrious shopkeeper, who minds his business and his character; a class of men hard to draw into agitation, but invaluable for their honesty and firmness. I believe he is a brush-maker."—"Cahirmoyle Correspondence," Duffy to O'Brien. He was also a bellows-maker; and one of the few sprightly agitators in Conciliation Hall—they were so few that O'Connell was said not to have a Wag in his Tail—gave him the nickname of Belis-arius.

O'Brien and the Seceders. He reviewed the recent transactions, treating O'Connell with watchful courtesy, and using the committee as a whipping-boy to suffer vicarious punishment. They owed eternal gratitude to O'Connell, but were they to have men such as the country had rarely produced put down, and the noblest paper any country ever saw crushed?

Mr. Brady, the same who had been the first to raise an independent voice on the subject, seconded the motion. Who, he demanded, has begun these dissensions? It was Lord John Russell. When Charles Gavan Duffy was on his trial he constituted himself a thirteenth juror to prejudice the other twelve against him, and to raise a division in the Association by describing him as a Separatist. The people through affection for O'Connell—and they would be base if they had not an affection for him—refrained from expressing an opinion; but the interest of the country demanded that they should break silence and they must now pronounce their decision.

Mr. John Francis Maguire* believed that unless a cordial reconciliation could be effected, the Repeal cause was at an end; but he advised that the resolutions, instead of taking the form of complaint, should be modified to express grief and pain at the senseless divisions which existed, and to respectfully demand that the Association would open its arms to the Seceders. This course was adopted, and Mr. George Mazon, a Unitarian, but an enthusiastic O'Connellite, brought up resolutions modified in tone but nearly identical in spirit with those just proposed. He recalled the time in oppressed Ireland when one man arose who did not despair of his country, one man who set to work for her deliverance, with superhuman daring to face her enemies, and inexhaustible energy to rally her friends. In later times they had seen the national cause served by men who added dignity to it by their ability, their worth, and their sincerity. They worked

* Editor of the *Cork Examiner*, and afterwards M.P. for Cork. Another speaker was Mr. Hennessy, uncle of Sir John Pope Hennessy, known to later times as a gifted Member of Parliament and Colonial Governor. His father and brother were, in the language of that day, sympathisers.

nobly to build up a literature for their native land; one Béranger had reanimated France, and there was among them more than one Béranger. What the Repealers wanted was to see these two elements of power coalesce.

Mr. Maguire felt assured that these resolutions would be respectfully received by all classes of Repealers. But Mr. Maguire left out of account the puissant force known as the Young Liberator.

In Clonmel, the capital of Tipperary, a meeting of the same character was held, Charles Bianconi, a devoted partizan of O'Connell, in the chair. It was unanimously resolved that the meeting deplored the existing dissensions, and desired that the differences might be speedily adjusted.

But to adjust the differences would be to throw away the end for which the differences were fomented.

Mr. John O'Connell assured the Cork Repealers that they had better address themselves to the Seceders, and induce them to abandon their illegal opinions. Till they did so, the Association would not receive them back though they had dwindled down to their last shilling and their last man. He was of opinion that the opposition was prodigiously exaggerated, "not more than forty at utmost had left the Association; on the other hand, there were eight millions who adhered to it."*

* To answer this audacious misstatement various districts immediately sent the names of more than forty Seceders each; Manchester, twelve officers and a hundred and sixteen members; Sligo, sixteen Town Commissioners or Repeal Wardens, with a substantial following of members; Templederry, a hundred and thirty members, with the priest at their head; Navan, the chairman of the Town Commission, with a contingent of members, and so forth; but the rivulets soon disappeared in a torrent.

O'Connell himself, after long delay and repeated postponements, answered the Cork Repealers in a letter of prodigious length, excusing himself at the outset for making so much of a remonstrance which contained more sound than sense. The productive force which had enabled the popular tribune to encounter so many difficulties successfully was plainly exhausted; the long meditated answer was a flippant evasion of the question from beginning to end. It defended what was not attacked, justified what was not questioned, raised anew the absurd alarm of high treason, but never dealt for an instant with the actual difficulties of the case, formulated with an unshrinking candour in the resolutions to which he was replying. By this time every one who cared to know, knew full well that the Seceders did not object to the Association being as peaceful as a Quaker meeting, provided it did not barter the Irish cause to any English party for any mess of pottage. Whether it would or would not take service with the Whigs was the only question at issue.

Though the Committee did not publish the letters of remonstrants they thought themselves entitled to answer them; and elaborate answers were constantly given to documents, when they appeared in the newspapers, which had been completely suppressed in the Association. Mr. Shea Lalor, a country gentleman, a magistrate, and a member of the General Committee, wrote to Mr. Ray to object to this practice. Gentlemen who were no longer members, he said, were constantly assailed by name, even from the chair, which was an

additional impropriety, but the moment an advocate appeared, not to defend their principles but to mitigate hostility towards individuals, he was silenced under the plea that the case was closed. It would have indicated a better judgment, and a more delicate sense of honour, to have first silenced the accusers, and then, as there would be no occasion for a defence, defence might also be prohibited. This communication Mr. John O'Connell ordered to be returned to Mr. Lalor as containing unfounded charges couched in terms of most unbecoming discourtesy.* As Mr. Lalor was Mr. John O'Connell's peer, socially and intellectually, and was equally with him one of the governing body of the Association, he was not disposed to be silenced in this fashion. Hitherto he had expressed no opinion on any question at issue between the Association and the Seceders, but he informed the Secretary that he proposed to attend the Association in the coming week and explain his sentiments publicly. Mr. Ray, in reply, announced that as he "dissented from the principles on which the Association was founded," and accused it of insult and persecution, he could not any longer remain a member. On the motion of the Head Pacificator he was expelled.

The end which the Seceders contemplated was not a separation from O'Connell, but such a reunion with him as would ensure an honest and vigorous manage-

* Mr. Lalor remonstrated personally with John O'Connell, with whom he had long been on intimate relations, on the charge of "most unbecoming discourtesy," and asked him to relieve him from such an imputation, suggesting embarrassing results that must follow a refusal. Mr. John O'Connell swore informations at Henry Street Police Office, and had Mr. Lalor bound over to keep the peace.

ment of the national cause. A letter of this period, preserved in the "Cahirmoyle Correspondence," discloses their policy distinctly:—

"You see it [opinion] was not dead but only a little lethargic, and it is making up for delay. The tradesmen of Dublin to the amount, I am assured, of at least 1,500, are about to present a strong remonstrance to the Association; the Repealers of Liverpool will send resolutions of the same character to the next meeting. I have seen a protest to be signed in Newry very ably written and very emphatic in its condemnation of recent proceedings in the Hall. These things and the avalanche of letters will make it necessary for O'Connell to seek a reconciliation. If so, this surely is the time to put the agitation in a right track once for all; to have regular accounts for the future, to have a committee with real power, and composed of men fit to use, and unlikely to abuse, it. Any junction which would merely enable O'Connell to do nothing with a plausible face, would be, I think, a far worse state of things than the present. . . . We are all most anxious to know the terms upon which you think a re-union would be serviceable to the country—I mean at this moment, for we all look to an ultimate re-union as essential." *

The Dublin Remonstrance was now complete. It had received the signatures of seventy-four Repeal wardens out of a hundred and twenty wardens in the metropolis, and of over three hundred members and a thousand associates. No one was permitted to sign it who was not on the books of the Association at the time of the Secession, and each name was followed by the address of the subscriber. These men were the working strength of the organisation in Dublin. A deputation

* "Cahirmoyle Correspondence," Duffy to O'Brien.

holding cards of membership was appointed to present it. They were refused admittance into the Hall on the ground that by signing it they virtually ceased to be members. They asked an interview with Mr. John O'Connell, but he refused to receive them. No other means being open to them they sent it by a messenger to the Chairman of the day, who happened to be a country member. The Chairman presented a large roll of paper to the meeting and invited their instructions respecting it. Mr. Ray, who manifestly knew what it was, cried out promptly, "We cannot receive any such thing;" and Mr. John O'Connell inquired for Hanlon, the messenger of the Association, and directed him to throw it out of the door. The messenger carried it out of the Hall and flung it in the gutter.* Mr. John O'Connell bore some resemblance to another historic mischief maker. He was as narrow, self-willed, and obstinate as the king who drove the American colonists to resistance, and as dangerous and fatal a counsellor.

From that hour the fate of Conciliation Hall was sealed. Thenceforth the Repeal rent rarely paid the weekly expenses; sometimes it would scarce pay more than an item or two—the rent of the Hall, for example, and the salary of Mr. Ray, or the travelling expenses of Captain Broderick, and the secret service money of the

* The Chairman here said that a document (a large roll of paper, which he held up) had been handed to him.

Mr. Ray: Oh, we cannot receive any such thing.

Mr. John O'Connell: We cannot receive anything not coming from a member. We cannot receive this. Who brought it here?

No answer was returned to this inquiry for the bearer of the document.

Mr. John O'Connell: Where is the messenger? Hanlon, take this and throw it out.—"Report of the Repeal Association," *Nation*, Oct. 31, 1846.

Head Pacificator. When, in the end, it became necessary to invite back the Seceders to prevent the doors being closed by insolvency, the Dublin Remonstrants would not return except on condition that the wrongs recited in the document flung in the gutter were individually redressed. All the possessions of the Repeal Association, its noble Irish Library, collected with pious pains and care, its national band, its furniture, finally the Hall itself were, in the course of time, sold to pay debts incurred in carrying on an agitation which the people would no longer support.

Up to this point we had endured whatever was done in the name of O'Connell with a forbearance which has few examples in the history of political contests. The proceedings of the Association consisted in a great part of rancorous criticism on the *Nation* and its allies, which we duly published; in Conciliation Hall all reply and all remonstrance from its own members were jealously suppressed. An experienced critic compared the Young Irelanders to a veteran regiment pelted by the brickbats of a mob, but never retaliating, and never breaking rank. The sentiment animating the young men, which was higher than the instinct of discipline, was effectively expressed at the time by one of themselves—

"Ye never will stain it, never!—
The cause that ye nobly wed,
What venom or gall soever
From parasite lips be shed;
Ye know how great hearts have striven—
Much suffered and much forgiven—

For over them shone high Heaven,
And before them their path outspread."*

But after the Dublin trades had to pick their Remonstrance out of the kennel it was no longer possible to prohibit retaliation. To shut the columns of the *Nation* permanently against the opinion of the people among whom it circulated, would have been an offence equivalent to the suppression of letters and the silencing of members in Conciliation Hall. I required that correspondents should sign their actual names to complaints, or in case of mere criticism, confide their names to me; but with this guarantee of good faith it was necessary to allow them a wide scope. The dammed-up feelings broke out like the waters of a reservoir whose walls have suddenly given way. To find space for correspondence from this time forth was so difficult

* Some of the contributions rejected in this spirit of forbearance, were a sore temptation to an editor. There is a tradition in Dublin that a citizen who fell under the censure of the Lord Mayor and Corporation, while they were still a formidable power, retained his wrath till he reached Tallagh Hill, from which you may see the city, though the hill is outside the boundaries, and there solemnly cursed and defied the civic authorities. Hence "bounce" is called Tallagh Hill talk in Ireland. A correspondent gathered into one bouquet all the warlike language of O'Connell and Mr. John O'Connell in 1843, under the mocking title of "Tara Hill Talk," but I dropped it into the waste paper basket. My watchfulness in excluding any reflection on O'Connell led to a pleasantry at which it is difficult to avoid smiling. McCarthy, who knew I was too much immersed in politics to be acquainted with current public amusements, brought me an "Answer to Correspondents" one day, the immediate insertion of which he pretended to desire. It was very innocent looking; merely assuring "An enquirer" that the popular song nightly encored at the Rotunda was purely transatlantic, and had no relation to Irish affairs." I saw some waggish mischief in his eye, and demanded what was the song in question. "Oh, a mere nigger melody," he rejoined. "What's the name of your nigger melody?" "I believe," he replied, "the name, or at any rate the chorus, is,

'Out of the way, old Dan Tucker;'"

and he vanished to avoid the penalty of his escapade.

that it constantly overflowed into departments of the journal ordinarily reserved with jealous care for literature. But it was read with an avidity which the poetry of Davis or the philosophy of Dillon had scarcely commanded. *

It was now plain that the current of national opinion could no more be arrested than a mountain stream. By striving to dam it O'Connell had only succeeded in turning it into a cataract. It is probable that by this time he discovered his error, but nothing is more difficult than to turn back with dignity. The retirement of members went on with increasing volume. One week a special supplement of the *Nation* was required to contain the letters and list of Seceders; and it was rarely

* O'Connell's answer to the Cork resolutions, described above (*ante* p. 303), had the bantering motto from Sheridan, "This is a very pretty quarrel as it stands; explanation would spoil it." A correspondent of the *Nation* immediately called attention to the fact that the second son of O'Connell had just then been promoted to an office of £1,500 a year; adding, with bitter pleasantry, "This is a very pretty appointment as it stands; explanation would spoil it." The disposal of patronage, of which little or nothing had been said hitherto, could no longer be sheltered from criticism. Correspondents affirmed that since the Whigs came in another of his sons was made a Deputy-Lieutenant of his county, a cousin was created a stipendiary magistrate, a Commissionership of Poor Laws was proffered to his nephew, which only financial impediments prevented him from accepting, and that various connections and dependents, whose names were given, had been provided for, One incident known at the time only to a narrow circle, constitutes what lawyers call a leading case, and will enable the reader to understand the general practice which then prevailed, without going into painful details. Mr. Baldwin, a Whig lawyer of adequate experience and with claims on his party, was promised the office of Master in Chancery by the Irish Government. The warrant, it is said, was actually made out. O'Connell wanted the office for Mr. Jerry J. Murphy, a brother-in-law of Mr. John O'Connell's, and went personally to the Castle to ask for it. He was told with many apologies, that the place had been given away, and the warrant prepared. But he insisted—on what penalty we may surmise—that Mr. Baldwin's appointment should be cancelled and his nominee accepted. After a brief struggle the officials gave way, and Mr. Murphy got the appointment.

possible any longer to go into detail except in conspicuous cases. But the silent secession was perhaps more remarkable. Conciliation Hall was like a citadel invested by a powerful enemy, from which the skilful engineers and trained captains were secretly retiring. Sir Colman O'Loghlen and Henry Grattan, Edmund Burke Roche and Sir Richard Musgrave, James Kelly and John Maher, even Maurice O'Connell and O'Neill Daunt were seen there no more. The barristers who had framed its reports and worked its sub-committees, Horace Fitzgerald and Robert Mullen, Wilson Gray and John Lloyd Fitzgerald, Moriarty and O'Farrell, Dwyer and Synan, silently withdrew. A few servile adherents of Mr. John O'Connell, a few expectants of favour from the Whigs, and a few paid agents, constituted the government of this once omnipotent organisation.

O'Connell sent letters of advice and instructions from time to time, but the influence of his son was still supreme. And that crisis had at length arrived, which is sure to come in a protracted political contest, when the original cause of quarrel is forgotten, and men contend no longer for opinions but for their will or their position. At such a time it is not enough to be in the right; when the spirit of faction is in the ascendant, to demonstrate that you are in the right is often an aggravation of the original offence; and the fury against the Seceders in Conciliation Hall was never so great as when, in the eyes of reasonable men, they had justified themselves on every point. Almost for the

first time, O'Connell had opponents who were entirely sincere and who had no private object in view; but if instead of being seventy years of age he had been still fifty, it may be doubted whether he would not have defeated them in the end. At worst, the strong man would have pulled down the fortress he could not retain. As it was, there was a general revolt from his authority in every part of the country in succession. The class who think deserted him unanimously. He scarcely retained a layman among them who had not passed his grand climacteric.

In favourable circumstances criticism is a powerful and speedy solvent of opinion, but in the social revolution which was now in progress the most searching criticism counted for little. To the mass of the people it was gusts of wind. But the things done in the name of the leader, and with his direct authority, done with a plainness that could not be misapprehended, and a frequency which dissipated doubt, at first disturbed and finally destroyed their confidence; and the stories which every post now brought from districts invaded by famine made them for the first time ready to watch him in a critical spirit. That he should assail Confederates who were to all appearance zealous and sincere, might be a proof of superior vigilance and insight, but that he applauded a Government which governed in such a fashion that the deaths of whole families, deaths on the high road and in the market place, were becoming familiar phenonema, that he should traffic for places while the people who loved him could not find enough

daily bread to save them from the tortures of famine, were facts which filled them with horror and despair. From Darrynane, where he remained till late in the autumn, he wrote on the subject of the famine, and was perhaps first to make the reasonable and practical proposal that a Central Board of Irish landlords should be established in Dublin, in "which religious differences would never be heard of" to consider the situation.* But to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on the Government who had the funds, the authority and the duty of protecting the community; to exhort the Irish landlords to remember like their ancestors that they had a country, which had a claim upon them superior to all governments, was an unpardonable offence. "In God's name, be patient, be patient yet awhile," Mr. John O'Connell wrote to the people, on behalf of the Association, "and relief you shall surely have." It was suggested by Mitchel, in the *Nation*, that a Council of Distress in this tremendous emergency might become such a Committee of Public Safety as had but to will the change in order to become an Irish Legislature and Executive. The *Times*, a little later, declared that

* Mr. John O'Connell enlarged upon this suggestion :—"I repeat, the man who would introduce *religious topics* at such a meeting—topics which have so tended to bring on the present crisis, by preventing hitherto the union of Irishmen—would prove himself the enemy of God and man." Men asked in amazement why he had not given the Repeal Association the benefit of this salutary sentiment? Five years later, when the Tenant League was at the height of its popularity, Lord John Russell proposed his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill Frederick Lucas and more than a hundred priests were members; but neither he, nor they, nor any one attempted to use that organisation to combat the Bill. On the contrary, the reasonable and natural course was taken of setting up a separate Association for the purpose.

the Council, when it was actually constituted, was in fact such a one "as would delight the soul of Wolfe Tone." But Conciliation Hall was now more sensitive to a breath of sedition than the *Times*. "It would," shrieked the Head Pacificator, "be an abandonment, a heinous abandonment of my duty to my absent leader, if I did not publicly, this day, denounce to the execration and horror of the world, a passage of such fiendish and accursed atrocity." What the country was to rely upon was not its own exertions, but the good intentions of a faded Irish peer, and two or three English and Scotch officials in Dublin Castle.

"I solemnly declare before heaven," cried the Pacificator, "that I think Lord Bessborough, and the functionaries of his Excellency in Ireland, have not only the most humane, the most benign intentions, but that they have also the actual knowledge of the state of destitution and of desperation which this awful, this horrible crisis of the destiny of Ireland, our afflicted country, demands."*

And Mr. John O'Connell had the intrepidity to assure the people that if they starved patiently the speedy result would be a Repeal of the Union.

"But I do believe the Government will not allow the people to be tempted beyond human endurance—that they will leave no stone unturned in seeking to relieve the existing distress; but even if the Government do fail in their duty, I have that confidence in the Irish people, from their sublimity of character and

* This patriotic Viceroy was intriguing at the date of this eulogy to bring back Lord Campbell as Chancellor of Ireland, and privately assured that gentleman that he would be sorry to see an Irishman, with Irish ideas of justice, equity, property, lunacy, and many other things, appointed to that situation.—"Life of Lord Campbell," vol. II., p. 201.

exemplary fortitude, that I do believe, even under the pressure of this calamity, they will still be true to those principles of peace and morality by which they have always been characterised. If they act thus, and I am firmly convinced and persuaded they will, we may rest assured that we are on the threshold of prosperity to them and happiness to our native land by the restoration of her native independence."

The *Nation* presented a different programme. There could be no surplus produce till the people were fed; the remedy necessary in Ireland was the same remedy which had been applied by every country in the world threatened with famine, when it had the good fortune to control its own affairs—to shut the ports against exportation. The corn grown in Ireland was sold in England, and the price of it, to the amount of four or five millions annually, was spent there by absentee landlords. Conciliation Hall was of opinion that the question of the Union ought to be ignored while this calamity was dealt with; but the famine was simply the result of the Union, which prevented us from protecting ourselves. And the Association which might have led opinion as with a silken thread, while it led it honestly, which was created to bring the Union to an end, was now only a buffer between the Government and the rage of the people.* And it was at length

* A trifling circumstance often stirs wrath which has endured great provocation with patience. The Rev. Michael Waldron, P.P., Cong, one of the habitual supporters of Conciliation Hall, disclosed the fact that Mr. John O'Connell silently suppressed a passage reflecting on the Whig alliance in a letter which he read at the Association, and on this disclosure the public anger was intense; for Cong was a parish where there were more than five hundred families in complete destitution, and Mr. John's brother-in-law had been made a Master in Chancery. This was the suppressed passage:—"Allow me to say that in this country we feel sur-

said plainly that the people, and the Young Irelanders above all, had been too patient, criminally patient.*

Even within the Hall murmurs began to break out against the rule of the Young Liberator. Mr. John Augustus O'Neill, who had seconded the Peace Resolutions, had been passed over in the selection of candidates for Parliament, and he announced, in an angry speech, that he resented this treatment. Though he was obedient to the guidance of the leader, he would not necessarily submit to his delegate; he had joined when Repeal was not an open question; he had not waited (like some recent recruits) till the rising sun of Whiggery had warmed his torpid patriotism; and he meant once for all to assert his position by becoming a candidate for his native city, the metropolis, at the next election. As the treatment of the Dublin Remonstrance was still agitating the public mind when this new quarrel arose, affairs were becoming critical, and O'Connell announced that he would return to Dublin.

In the interval, John Dillon, who was not thinking

prised at finding your illustrious father lauding the Government's good intentions, while the people are left helpless to starve. He ought to have added his oft-reiterated expression that the road to a certain hot place is paved with such intentions, because they were never put in execution."—*Nation*, October 17th.

* Men blush that they have borne with absurdities which the broadest farce or the wildest satire would scarcely venture to depict—borne to see a man on the borders of insanity gravely set up to guard them against excesses and indiscretions—to see a Protestant writer, of easy morality and convenient principles, retained as a hired champion of the Catholic religion—and, most miserable folly of all, to see scamps who have penetrated into English society no further than the gaming-table or the bagnio, and blockheads who are the butt of the Whig clubs of London, elected Irish representatives; of course, to convert the English Parliament to the belief that we are fit and entitled to govern ourselves!—*Nation*, October 17th.

of victory for his party, but of the condition of the country, addressed a proposal for reconciliation to the press. The points of difference were the Peace Resolutions and the exclusion of the *Nation*. The latter point might be disposed of by ceasing to circulate any newspaper, and the former by adopting the most specific pledge to seek a repeal of the Union by peaceful means alone. But more than this, the most effectual method of promoting the desire for a domestic parliament was to prove in a great emergency that we could do our own business better than the British Parliament.

"If the committee of the Repeal Association could now stand before the country as the instructors of the English Government—if it possessed ability to originate useful measures and influence to compel their adoption, the advantages of self-government would be made plain to all, and decency itself would compel our English rulers to abandon duties which they discharged under the guidance of others. This I take to be the rationale of 'moral force.' To seek for change by moral force is not to shout for it, but to demonstrate its utility. And the way to demonstrate the utility of Repeal is, by showing that we can do our own business better than others can do it for us."

Smith O'Brien, who was impatient of idleness at such a crisis, proposed in a letter to the *Nation* that the young men, instead of public meetings or a rival Association, should apply themselves to prepare papers on the public wants and interests of the country. They might be published in the *Nation*, in a special department, and with the signatures of the writers. The proposal was promptly adopted. Teaching was practical work, for opinion is the root from which action springs;

and teaching in their own names would maintain their individual responsibility, and tend to give the series of papers the interest of a debate. After various modifications the new department was named the Irish Party.*

At the beginning of November, O'Connell was at his post, but those who hoped that he would moderate the spirit of faction were disappointed. The chairman of the day wished to explain that he had been misrepresented by a London newspaper, which described him as having suggested that the Dublin Remonstrance should be "kicked out" of the Hall; and O'Connell assumed the whole responsibility of that transaction by exclaiming, "If you didn't say so, you ought." Smith O'Brien's project, the primary purpose of which was to avoid creating a rival Association, suggested only the criticism that he was on the road to ruin. When he organised the Parliamentary Committee of the Association, he had been assured that he was doing noble work; but now when he, and the writers of its best reports, were about to continue the same work elsewhere, they were no better than infidels.

"They are to write upon various topics, and to do a vast deal for Ireland," said O'Connell. "Well, it will be remembered that the infidel philosophers who heralded the way for the Revolution in France, began by writing essays. They attacked everybody and everything, and violated everything sacred. I

* "Mitchel is very ill, spitting blood, and unable to leave his bed, but happily *not* in any danger of his life. I have just seen Stokes, who has no apprehension of him, if he pass this night well. As the 'Phalanx,' and 'Young Ireland' are objected to, what do you say to 'The Irish Party' as a heading for the new department?"—Cahirmoyle Correspondence, Duffy to O'Brien.

don't know whether the writers of the Phalanx will succeed as well as Voltaire, Rousseau, and the other infidel French writers; but whether they mean it or not, they will be led on perhaps further than they intend." *

In all O'Connell's proceedings there is, perhaps, nothing harder to justify than this ungenerous criticism. O'Brien and his friends were willing to work in a field where they would not jostle with him. It was determined, one must infer, that they should be bullied into complete silence, or goaded into active resistance.

A whip was made on the occasion of O'Connell's return; half-a-dozen clergymen were present; and Mr. O'Neill Daunt, much against his inclination, I make no doubt, was induced to attend for once and bear testimony against the offenders.

"With respect to the Seceders," Mr. Daunt said, "he would briefly express his inability to conceive how they could reconcile their secession with their declared conviction that Repeal was indispensable for Ireland. Did they hope—could they expect to achieve the Repeal in a state of separation from this Association?"

Mr. Daunt's difficulty in comprehending how gentlemen could justify themselves for staying away from an Association from which they had been individually ex-

* The writings of the young men, however innocent or praiseworthy, did not escape the effect of this suggestion. "Mr. Davitt, of Limerick, (one of O'Brien's friends wrote to him,*) "went round canvassing against the 'Library of Ireland,' and cut down the circulation in that town from four dozen to seven copies." Wherever the national literature was pushed out, the garbage of the Seven Dials and the filth of Holywell Street rushed in; for the patriots who were expelling it had nothing wherewith to replace it.

* S. H. Bindon to O'Brien, Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

pelled in their absence, was very genteel comedy indeed. During the day's proceedings he himself seconded a motion for the expulsion of a Mr. Jones; and it is to be hoped he was able to conceive, without too great an intellectual effort, the motive of Mr. Jones' subsequent "separation from the Association."

Mr. Daunt's ingenious performance seems to have been too good to be dismissed without an encore. At the ensuing meeting the chairman, Mr. Keshan, who was Lord Mayor of Dublin at the time, had also a difficulty in accounting for the absence of the Young Irelanders, but he submitted an ingenious hypothesis on the subject:—

"They have seceded from amongst us," he said, "though I don't know what reason they had for doing so. Very likely they wanted to get places before their turn, or they wanted to become leaders before their time."

The same official, again in the chair, and again in O'Connell's presence, nakedly declared that Lord Bessborough had discovered the true method to conciliate Ireland, which was no other than to give all the patronage to O'Connell, and he announced himself as a candidate for an early appointment.*

On the question of patronage, many practical persons considered the Young Irelanders to be distinctly in the wrong. It was easy to say, with a plausibility which

* "He (Lord Bessborough) said that if the Government wished to conciliate Ireland, and to promote her prosperity, all the patronage of the country should be placed in the hands of Daniel O'Connell. . . . Is such a man to be obstructed in his views? Certainly not. . . . Were I offered a place to-morrow I would certainly accept it."—Speech of the Lord Mayor, in the Chair, in Conciliation Hall, *Nation*, November 21.

appeared irresistible—Are we to allow all the public appointments to be filled by our enemies? Is it not the right of Irishmen to occupy the offices of trust and authority in Ireland? Certainly it was the right of Irishmen; but if these offices were only given as bribes, if the necessary condition of accepting one of them was absolute silence on the national question, then it was a right which must be placed in abeyance while we were contending for a greater right. The gentlemen who were made judges and commissioners of Customs for supporting the Union were filling offices which it was the right of Irishmen to occupy, but the conditions under which they obtained them made the traffic infamous. We were maintaining a contest with the British Government—under prodigious disadvantages, in a foreign parliament disdainful of our claims, in an unfriendly community whose hatred was only mitigated by contempt; if we became place-beggars to the agents of the system we proposed to overthrow, our cause would on the instant sink below serious criticism.* But these suggestions were an unknown tongue to persons who, like Lord Mayor Keshan, could not comprehend how a sane man who could get a place did not imme-

* The *Cork Examiner* illustrated the working of the system in the case of an obscure Repeal member, Sir Henry Barron (who served as a safe whipping boy), by a significant list of his achievements in this class of parliamentary practice. No. 1. William Newell Barron, Assistant-Barrister for the King's County—brother to Sir Henry; No. 2. Pierce George Barron, First-class stipendiary magistrate—cousin to Sir Henry; No. 3. John Netterville Barron, Second-class stipendiary magistrate—cousin to Sir Henry; No. 4. Henry Page Turner Barron, Attaché to the British Embassy at Turin—son and heir to Sir Henry; No. 5. Pierce Marcus Barron, Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, under new Act—cousin of Sir Henry.

diately accept it. It seemed hard, however, that this indulgent view of the duty of nationalists was only to extend to barristers and gentry; the farmer was still expected to defy his landlord, and the mechanic his employer, in the interest of a candidate recommended from Conciliation Hall.

The Remonstrants made O'Connell's return the occasion of a public meeting in the Rotunda, to pass themselves in review before him and the country. There was an immense crowd, which, after the building was quite filled, swarmed into the surrounding streets. A special place was assigned to wardens, volunteers, and members of committee, and they were said to amount to two hundred; the hall was occupied by seven hundred other seceding members. The occasion was chiefly remarkable, however, for the first appearance of Michael Crean, a man who was a type of all that is best in the Irish artizan, and who spoke with a simple pathos which brought tears into many eyes. He was a boy, he said, at the time of the great Clare election, and his heart was on fire with love and veneration when he first saw O'Connell. He had one darling little boy, and in the same spirit that Catholics dedicate their children to some favourite saint, he gave him the name of Daniel O'Connell. But much as he loved O'Connell he loved Ireland better. He would listen to no man saying an unkindly word of the Liberator, but he feared his favourite son had misled him. He ought, like another Warden of Galway—the Brutus of Irish history—to sacrifice private affection to the public good. He pro-

bably did not recognise the great change that had been wrought in Ireland; a people without education might be driven like lambs before the shepherd, but men who had learned to read and think could not be driven, they must be led by the dictates of their judgment and conscience. For himself he would walk out of his way to avoid hurting a worm, and he would sacrifice his own life rather than take that of a fellow-creature, yet he was branded as a lover of physical force!

The body of Remonstrants reminded O'Connell that they were the successors of the once high-spirited artizans of Dublin, who in the eighteenth century were the refuge of Irish nationality; who had aided Molyneaux in defending the woollen trade, whose patriotism had given significance to the Drapier's letters, who had enabled Lucas to defend municipal liberty and to found a free press, who had been Grattan's warmest partizans in establishing the independence of the nation, and O'Connell's in obtaining religious liberty; and that they themselves were among the men who, in 1842, had induced him to take up anew the demand for a national legislature.

Fr. Kenyon, the young priest who made his *debut* at Kilrush, interposed in a different spirit. In a letter almost as vigorous and telling as one of the Drapier's, he raised the question whether O'Connell could any longer be safely entrusted with the lead of the Irish people. If his character could be kept separate from the bad faith and base policy which reigned at Conciliation Hall, it would be a joy to preserve it from shame

which an old man could not hope to outlive. But his unprincipled intimates and hungry dependents, supplemented by true but inconsiderate friends, made it impossible. The vile arts of the interested has been plied with fatal assiduity; large bodies of Irishmen in whose mind O'Connell had long been associated with the purest ideal of patriotism, forgetting the effects of age and other less excusable influences, were induced to profess unabated confidence in his counsels. Certain bishops mistakingly associating the interests of the Catholic religion with his fatal policy, published similar professions; and it was a psychological fact worthy of note that whenever a bishop was so minded he was sure to be supported by the opinion of the whole body of his clergy. Thus a false standard of opinion was fabricated by a grovelling press, and the lacerated hearts and hopes of honest and brave men were offered week after week in disgusting sacrifice. When at length the intelligent citizens of Cork sought to rouse O'Connell from his lethargy and haply reclaim him for his country, he was so far gone in delusion as to laugh in their faces. What a contrast between that mirth, as painful to hear as the pointless laughter of an idiot over a parent's hearse, and the melting pathos which the same delusions wrung from the unsophisticated heart of Dr. Cane. He was grateful to O'Connell, but he could not, in the language of Swift, "ruin his country to show his gratitude." Neither would he pass over in silence offences calculated to entail danger and dishonour to the nation and its posterity. For his part, therefore, he re-

nounced the leadership of O'Connell till he mended his ways.*

The war against the *Nation* had begun with professions of anxiety for its prosperity; it was shut out of the Repeal reading-rooms, it was alleged, only on urgent public grounds. Now at length, however, O'Connell declared that to buy it was an offence and a folly. Some enthusiastic follower having announced his determination to burn the *Nation*, O'Connell reminded him that he would first have to commit the absurdity of paying for it. Thus the great work contemplated from the beginning was at length consummated, the *Nation* was placed on the *Index Expurgatorious* of Conciliation Hall. It was an offence to buy it, to read it, to lend it, to borrow it. The Repeal reading-room into which it was admitted had long forfeited its connection with the parent society. The man who sold it in the way of business was denounced as a bad citizen. The man who

* Speranza expressed the same feeling with the tenderness of a woman:—

"Pray for him—pray: an archangel has fallen low;
There's a throne less in heaven—there is sorrow on earth,
Weep, angels; laugh, demons! When *his* hand could strike the blow,
Where shall we seek for truth, honour, or worth?"

Dillon recalled O'Connell's sly enjoyment, a year or two before, in telling us how effectually he had checkmated the policy of John Keogh when that leader began to fall behind the march of events; and I told him in return a story I heard at my mother's knee, of the danger of setting a bad example. In one of the Irish famines, a farmer, in a condition above want, was induced by the bad advice of his wife to send out his father to beg. The old man was equipped with the customary bag and staff, and half a double blanket. When he was gone, the second half of the blanket was missed, and search for it was made in vain. At length some one thought of asking the farmer's little son if he had seen it. "Oh, yes," he said, "I have *put* it by in the garret." "What do you want with it?" inquired his mother. "Maybe," said he, "it'll do for my father when I grow up and I want to send him out to beg!"

bought it was a fool. But time, as the poet teaches, "shows who will and can." The *Nation* had wound itself into the fibres of the Irish heart. The poor peasants clubbed their pence that they might hear on their only day of rest what they could do for the cause; the young tradesmen, to whom it had become almost as necessary as their daily bread, clung to it. The Conservative students, enjoying it at a stolen pleasure, trembling to be caught in an act of patriotism; the Irish exiles in England or France, or felling forests in Canada, or digging railways in the Western Republic, who still longed, liked their predecessors two generations earlier, to hear "how was Old Ireland, and how did she stand," the poor Irish soldier who stole into a secret place with his treasure, the young priest who judged it with his own brain and conscience, not by word of command, cherished it the more for the dangers that it ran. "We never," a young farmer wrote at this time, "knew how we loved the *Nation* till now." * This enthusiasm, the slanderers declared, was merely the paroxysm of a temporary fever; but it did not so prove. More than a generation has passed since those events, and to-day

* "We obtained to-day some curious information respecting the recent schism in the Repeal ranks from Mr. ——, the principal Roman Catholic bookseller in Limerick. I asked him what effect had the Conciliation Hall denunciation of the *Nation* produced on its sale. 'Three weeks ago,' was his answer, 'I was supplying thirty copies of the *Nation* weekly; I am now supplying eighty, and had I been able to meet the first increased demand, that number would have been raised to one hundred.' Mr. —— added that so disgusted were many of the most respectable Limerick Repealers with the treatment Smith O'Brien and the Young Irelanders had received, that he, and to his knowledge thirty other fellow-tradesmen, had refused to subscribe again to O'Connell's rent."—"Notes of an Irish Tour in 1846," by Lord John Manners, M.P.

only an exceptional man can point out where Conciliation Hall stood; its hired *claque* have disappeared as completely as Major Sirr's battalion of testimony; insanity, suicide, the profligate renunciation of opinions for place, the fog of obscurity have swallowed them up; its special press died in a stench; but the work done by the young men of the *Nation* is to be found in every Irish library in the five divisions of the world; the soldier on his march, the missionary in China and India, the digger in California, the solitary shepherd in the Australian Bush have found refreshment in it. The men, too, have been heard of in the world not to their discredit. And if the capital of the island which he did so much to free from the chains of sectarian ascendancy, possesses a great monument to the memory of O'Connell it was these "enemies of the Liberator" at home and abroad, more than any men, commenced and crowned with success this national undertaking.*

O'Connell had prepared a *coup* for his reappearance which was expected to counteract the protest of a legion of grumbling tradesmen and Carbonari curates. A bishop had never taken a personal part in the proceedings of the Association, but in the middle of November, Dr. Browne, the Bishop of Elphin, presented himself at Conciliation Hall to sanction and applaud its recent policy. He had gone there to protest against physical force and allusions to the sword.

* John Dillon, then M.P. for Tipperary, was one of the Secretaries; P. J. Smyth was an active member of the committee, Richard O'Gorman sent it effective help from New York, Edward Butler and Kevin O'Doherty from Sydney and Brisbane, and I was treasurer in Melbourne, and remitted £1,000, a larger sum than any county in Ireland contributed.

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"We have read history, gentlemen, and I trust we have read it to advantage. We know that in all countries where revolutions, or reformations, or reforms, or whatever you may be pleased to call them, have been achieved by physical force, what has been the consequence? What? Infidelity, immorality, and want of allegiance to the throne. It would take a century to bring a people so circumstanced back to any religious feeling, or feeling of allegiance. How did the French revolution begin? What means were adopted to foster it? I will not name any particular journal; I don't wish to make anything like personal allusions; but we all know that by certain addresses in papers—certain infidel productions by persons who had not the manliness to come forward to proclaim their views, they insidiously proceeded in their attempts, and when they found they had the people's minds demoralised and prepared for wicked counsel, they unmasked their designs and subverted both the altar and the throne. Are we to listen to Young Ireland? Can we, for one instant, allow amongst us those principles that led to Jacobinism and other monstrous evils?"

His first object in coming to the Hall was to assure the beneficent sovereign of the realm that there were not in her dominions hearts more sincerely attached to her than the Catholic hierarchy.

"I had, however," he added, "another object, and that was, to enter my solemn protest against the puny efforts of the Young Irelanders. They are the enemies of religion. They thought to spread infidelity through the land, but they have failed. They thought to sever the ties which unite the clergy and laity. In that they failed also."*

It is the duty of a Catholic bishop to exhort and rebuke offenders against faith and morals; and though I did not think the particular bishops who had come

* Repeal Association, Nov. 16. Reported in *Nation*, Nov. 21.

with such singular opportuneness to the aid of Mr. John O'Connell, had exercised their functions in a paternal spirit, I resolved to treat the attack with the utmost gravity and respect. I immediately wrote a letter to the Bishop of Elphin asking a bill of particulars. I was unconscious, I said, of having given any just ground of offence, by my own act or the act of others, but I was a man immersed in secular affairs, who had no pretensions to determine questions of conscience, and as I desired to be set right if I were wrong, I requested him to be good enough to specify the articles in the *Nation* on which he grounded his serious censure. It was not an unreasonable request from a Catholic gentleman to a Catholic bishop, who had assailed him in public. There are few men of any class above the rank of a peasant who do not recognise the duty of proving or withdrawing personal imputations. But I never received any reply from the Bishop of Elphin. He either disdained to answer, or found it inconvenient to do so. And though nothing in the after-life of these young men lent the least support to his imputation, it confirmed a suspicion previously sown with malignant care, and for twenty years and upwards it was an active agent in Irish affairs, when O'Connell was long in his grave and John O'Connell had sunk into complete obscurity. This bishop, who signalised himself by visiting Conciliation Hall, only said a little more plainly what other bishops had hinted or implied. History has not many spectacles more melancholy or disheartening than this picture of men exercising the highest functions, the trustees of an

immense reserve of public confidence, becoming the puppets of a political intrigue, and the mouthpiece of misrepresentation. They had to deal with a generation of young men essentially as just, generous, and disinterested as ever was born in the island, who, in mind and spirit, were of the stuff that makes missionaries and martyrs, and the use they proposed to make of them was to hunt them from public life.*

A reaction came of course, for a reaction from injustice is inevitable, but it came too late for the interest of the country. And it has carried with it the penalty that the authority of bishops in Irish affairs has disastrously diminished as a social force, and fallen far below its natural and salutary scope. But it could not evade the inevitable law.†

* It was a comfort to English statesmen that bishops repudiated the sword for ever, and in all contingencies. The worthlessness, for any practical purpose, of professions of this nature was plain to men of sense, but was scarcely enough insisted upon in the controversy of the day. We knew, indeed, that the first Parliament of Charles II. imposed upon ministers of the English Church the declaration that "a subject, under no pretence, might bear arms against his King." This declaration was joyfully accepted by the Church of England, but did not prevent a large number of the same bishops and rectors afterwards bearing arms, or encouraging others to bear arms, against his brother and immediate successor. But we could not know that the incredible profession of some of the Irish bishops in favour of the "one drop of blood" principle would not prevent them assisting, a few years later, to organise an Irish brigade for the service of the Pope when his secular dominions were in danger.

† The particular bishop who distinguished himself on this occasion, if he had not chanced to be a bishop, would have counted for little. O'Connell named him the Dove of Elphin, which was scarcely fair to doves; a more accurate ornithologist would have classified him differently. Later, when troubles fell thick on Conciliation Hall, he was understood to have given up the unprosperous concern; and some one accounted for his retreat, by quoting the opening line of a poem of McCarthy's, famous in those days—

"The Dove will fly from a ruined nest!"

He reappeared in Irish politics a few years later, as the special patron of the two notable Members of Parliament who betrayed the Tenant League

A shrewd and kindly old attorney, who did not like to see the *Nation* encountering new difficulties, took occasion to recommend a prudent silence as the fittest policy in the premises. "Never run your head against a wall, my dear," he whispered to me, "especially a church wall."

It may help us to estimate the policy adopted by Dr. Higgins and his imitators, if we remember that the Minister whom they intended to maintain in office by denouncing Young Ireland finished by passing the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill! And his chief colleague slandered Irish priests to the Holy See as shamefully as Giraldus Cambrensis, and in private suggested hanging a few of them as a warning to the remainder.*

for their personal ambition; one of whom ended the career of a sharper in the grave of a suicide, while the other made what may be regarded as a still more painful and tragic exit. At the period of the visit to Conciliation Hall, Fr. Kenyon rebuked the censor with singular power and courage. The obedience sought was, he declared, a canting travesty of Catholic truth and duty. Theologians taught that even the decision of a General Council could only command unqualified acceptance after the form of examination and deliberation had been duly observed; but "Now, forsooth, every intemperate tirade of an individual bishop, nine parts mayhap, politico-factious, and one part politico-religious, though unmarked by the faintest trace of discretion, and redolent, to the very verge of nausea, of abject servility, and undiscriminating violence, was to be welcomed as a blessing, and obeyed without a murmur."

* In December, 1847, Lord Palmerston wrote to Lord Minto, then his agent at Rome:—"But you may safely go further than Clarendon has chosen to do, and you may confidently assure the Papal authorities that at present, in Ireland, misconduct is the rule, and good conduct the exception, in the Catholic priests. That they, in a multitude of cases, are the open, and fearless, and shameless instigators to disorder, to violence, and murder, and that every day and every week the better conducted, who are, by constitution of human nature, the most quiet and timid, are being scared by their fellow priests, as well as by their flocks, from a perseverance in any efforts to give good counsel, and to restrain violence and crime."

"The irritation and exasperation thence growing up in the public mind against the Catholic priesthood is extreme, and scarcely anybody now talks of these Irish murders without uttering a fervent wish that a dozen priests might be hung forthwith, and the most effectual remedy which has been

On the day of the bishop's speech, every document read in the Association was an attack on Young Ireland, except one. Mr. James remitted £200 from Boston, and informed the Association that it had been intended to remit £1,000, but as the recent discussions had rendered it impossible, he sent the sum in hand. O'Connell was much exhilarated by this timely remittance and took occasion to declare that "he did not care twopence for Young Ireland; nay, twopence was too much, he did not care three halfpence!" The Repeal Association was again on its triumphant march, and it was a great day for Ireland. Next day, McGee pointed out that the £200 had been collected so long ago before he left America in 1845, and its remittance furnished a clear proof that contributions to the Association had altogether ceased.*

But officers of the National organisation, and bishops of the National Church were not odds enough against the Young Irelanders; the English Government were called in. The new Chancellor re-appointed the Justices of the Peace who were removed or had resigned in the time of Sugden, but in doing so he omitted Smith

suggested, and which seems the most popular, is that whenever a man is murdered in Ireland, the priest of the parish should be transported. A more generally popular proposal would be that he should be hung, and many who clamber for martial law fancy, I have no doubt, that by martial law this latter process could be adopted."

* Any recent American opinion was undoubtedly on the side of the Seceders. The Repealers of New Orleans sent £70 as a subscription for additional copies of the *Nation*. The *Catholic Telegraph*, the organ of the Bishop of Cincinnati, called attention to the fact, that while a verbal support of the Colleges' Bill was made a pretence of assailing the Young Irelanders, Sheil and Morgan John O'Connell, who had voted for it in Parliament, were pets of the Association.

O'Brien from his list; it was only when the magistrates of Limerick, by a special address, forced him to act that O'Brien was restored to an office which he had resigned in defence of public principle. In Kilkenny and Limerick the local magistracy were too few to perform the necessary duties of the office, and they recommended certain additions to the roll. The Chancellor acted on their advice generally, but it was noted that two gentlemen so recommended were not appointed, and that these were persons who had withdrawn their confidence from O'Connell—Dr. Geary of Limerick, and Dr. Cane of Kilkenny. When an explanation was demanded the Chancellor protested that the uniform practice had long been not to appoint practising physicians to the bench. The Medical Society interposed and denied that any such practice existed. They presented a long list of practising physicians who were active magistrates. In Wexford, Waterford and Kerry, King and Queen's counties, in Longford and Mayo, a practising physician was in the Commission; in Carlow there were two, in Cork five. The usage relied on was wholly unknown in England. Once more the Chancellor had to retreat.

O'Brien's project of the Irish Party was carried out. It opened with some papers of considerable value. Dillon explained in untechnical language the exact provisions of the acts to provide employment for the people; O'Brien addressed a number of practical suggestions to the class who, like himself, were owners of land; McCarthy wrote a charming paper on the improvement

of the metropolis in which a foreign tourist is made to admire the eminent Irishmen—the Granbys, Sackvilles, Nelsons, Nassaus, and so forth, whose names grace its streets, and whose statues adorn its thoroughfares; Mr. Ramsay advocated the creation of a peasant proprietory; Doheny wrote on the use of municipal institutions; and Martin on the political economy of the Irish famine. O'Brien suggested the establishment of model farms and agricultural schools, the colonisation of waste lands, and a national system of railways. It is impossible to read his letters without respect for his practical ability and contempt for the Government which did nothing.

The monotonous scold in Conciliation Hall was relieved occasionally by a touch of farce; a barber was presented to the audience who desired to assure them that not he, but his misguided brother, was a Young Irelander; he, for his particular part, would rather be a Ribbonman or a Molly Maguire; and a collector of

* This paper, signed D. F. Courtenay, and the only one published under a *nom de plume*, makes a suggestion, since realised, that the statues of Burke and Goldsmith should stand before the College, and those of Moore and Grattan near at hand. The series of papers began in the *Nation* of November, and was continued for some months. Barry thought the experiment was but moderately successful. "I wish," he wrote, "you had delayed the 'Irish Party' papers, till you were ready with something better. I hoped and thought that my paper would be the worst, but I think it is one of the best, which I am sorry for. Dillon's is very useful and good. D. F. Courtenay's—a fictitious name, surely—though well written, occupies a space disproportionate to the subject. Haughton's absurd, yet, if limited to one-fourth its length, admissible on the grounds assigned for its insertion. O'Brien's (which is most admirable), has the appearance of not belonging to the Party, in being the second of a series. Why the deuce was not the first delayed a week to avoid this defect? . . . I, perhaps, overrate public expectation regarding these papers, but I really would urge you, and all the men concerned, to make them such as to *command* attention."

Repeal rent, known for his success in that pursuit as "the patriotic car driver," was produced on another occasion to aver that he once drove Meagher, Mitchel, and Duffy in his covered car to the Lower Castle yard—for what purpose they visited that suspicious locality the audience could of course surmise. O'Connell contributed his share to the sport by ridicule of the Irish Party. When, he demanded, were the physical force phalanx going to fight? Was it to-morrow, or to-morrow week, or in a month, or in a year? This banter, at which the men assailed only smiled, stung some of their supporters past endurance. They demanded that the Young Irelanders should meet the people face to face as of old, and counsel them who had no longer any other counseller. It was soon impossible to resist this appeal. Since they were not permitted to pursue the modest career of letters in silence, they determined that for once at least they would resume their place on the platform.

They summoned a meeting, and it proved a success, which amazed, almost as much as it delighted, the young men. It was held in the historic Rotunda, in a hall decorated under the inspection of Meagher, who loved symbols and splendour, and understood their subtle effect on a poetic people. There were two thousand persons in the body of the building, and six hundred in the reserved seats; a few priests, a dozen or two professional men, but mostly artizans of a comfortable class, mercantile assistants, and the students of the schools of law and medicine. A great power had plainly

sprung up at their call, in the very seat of O'Connell's authority. Such a meeting had not been seen since the death of Davis. The veteran rank and file of the National Party in the metropolis were undeniably present. On a platform rising above the level of the hall, decorated with banners of green and gold, bearing the most imposing names in Irish history, sat the leaders of the new movement and their most influential adherents.

A man of genius who was present, and occupied himself chiefly with the forces which set the assembly in motion, sent me his impressions later:—

"There, dressed as he always was, in solemn black, sat Dillon, calm, gentle, brave; his broad brow expanding with the enthusiasm that swelled within it, and his dark eye half concealing, half emitting the fire of which it was a fountain, as he leaned forward to take note of that wonderful assembly. O'Gorman, handsome, graceful, dandified; the soul of whim and humour, at one moment joking with a friend, at another kindling with the enthusiasm of the scene. Doheny, rough, generous, bold, a son of the soil, slovenly in dress, red-haired and red-featured, but a true personification of the hopes, passions, and traditions of the people. Meagher, his indolent air replaced by alertness, and his tranquil face flushed with an unaccustomed hue, as he smiled at the unexpected fulfilment of his hopes. There was Barry, disciplined by travel and study, who had meditated on history on great historical fields, and debated politics with great politicians, who formed his opinions with such deliberation that to the crowd they seemed wanting in enthusiasm. And McGee, imperfectly understood even by his competitors, but a man whose genius covered a wider field than any of that brilliant young group." *

* Mitchel was absent, being still an invalid, and I, because I contributed to the occasion a report on the history and causes of the Secession which occupied me till the chair was actually taken.

The speeches have lost their interest, for the young men justified themselves upon points which are no longer in doubt. They had not brought division into the Association, Dillon declared; O'Connell stood responsible for destroying that great organisation in the interest of the Whigs. They would not meddle with his motives, but the naked fact was beyond dispute. They had not conspired to displace O'Connell, Doheny affirmed; the charge was just as true as the imputation of infidelity, or the suggestion of high treason. They were arraigned for every crime that public men could commit except one—nobody said they had begged places from the Whigs. Meagher still clung to the belief that all Irishmen might be converted to nationality, and he would not relinquish it until he got a full and fair trial.

"When I see an Association," he said, "tolerant and comprehensive in its principles, dignified, rational, and pure in its conduct, undegraded by buffoonery, unsullied by petty practices of corruption, free from all taint of sectarian bigotry, free from all suspicion of revolutionary designs; when I see such an Association based on such principles, conducted in such a spirit, appealing in vain to the Whigs, Tories, and Orangemen of Ireland, then I too will think they have hearts and heads unlike the hearts and heads of other men, and I will begin to despair of a country that is cursed with such a people."

He turned the practice of the sham Committee under the Young Liberator into justifiable contempt:—

"Three Repeal Wardens in Cappoquin wrote to Mr. Ray that they had abandoned all hope of reconciliation in consequence of the language used by Mr. O'Connell towards Smith O'Brien. Mr. Ray assured them of the delight of the Association in

parting with men who unquestionably contemplated a resort to arms. 'I am for freedom of discussion,' says Mr. Shea Lalor. 'That is physical force,' exclaims the Committee. 'I am for the publication of the accounts,' intimates Mr. Martin. 'You oppose the peace policy,' rejoins Mr. Ray. 'I protest against place-hunting,' writes Mr. Brady from Cork. 'Sir, you contemplate a resort to arms,' rejoins the Secretary from Dublin. He hoped he would be excused for trifling with these subjects, but it was as difficult to treat them seriously as to describe a farce with sublimity."

Two metropolitan priests, Fr. Meehan and Dr. O'Carroll, vehemently defended the Young Irelanders and the *Nation* from the charge of indifference in religion. The latter observed that Mr. O'Connell had lately declared there were only two priests in Dublin friendly to the young men, and not a bishop in the island; but for his part he could affirm that there was scarcely one metropolitan parish in which some of the clergy did not sympathise with them, and a bishop at his own table had recently assured him that he shared this sympathy. James Haughton, whose words carried peculiar weight with moderate and thoughtful men, closed the proceedings by declaring that it was not for unlawful opinions, but for their opposition to the Whig alliance, and to the introduction of sectarian subjects into the Repeal Association, that the young men were sacrificed.

The effect of the meeting was electric; men talked of nothing else from Kerry to Donegal.* But its most

* It furnishes some gauge of the wide interest it excited, that Mr. Henderson, a bookseller in Belfast, and no way connected with the Young Irelanders, brought out the report in a pamphlet for circulation in Ulster.

signal success was the impression it produced on the mind of O'Connell. McGee has described it on the authority of an eye-witness:—

"The morning after that event O'Connell refused to eat at breakfast. His chaplain (to console him), observed that the large meeting the evening previous was gathered together 'out of curiosity' to hear 'the young orators.' 'You are mistaken, my friend,' said the old statesman: 'it was a great meeting—they are a great party.'"*

Another of the young men, still living, heard a different version of the transaction, or, it may be, of a second scene on the same day, also from an eye-witness:—

"The next morning, O'Connell sat in his study in Merrion Square, the daily papers before him; some friends, lay and clerical, around. He was depressed. 'Don't mind them, Mr. O'Connell,' said one of these friends, 'they are brainless boys. We will crush them.' 'Ah, no, no,' said O'Connell, 'they are a powerful party, and we must have them back.' One of the friends was Sir Colman O'Loghlen. He seized O'Connell's hand, 'Commission me,' said he, 'to say that to Smith O'Brien.' 'I do,' said O'Connell. 'Be my ambassador; tell him and his friends to come back on his own terms.' At that moment, John O'Connell entered. Hearing what had passed, he protested it should not be, and the old man had not strength to oppose his best beloved son."†

* McGee's *Memoirs of Charles Gavan Duffy*. New York, 1849.

† The same scene is described in Mr. P. J. Smyth's "Life of General Meagher;" the conclusion a little more fully:—"Sir Colman, delighted, for he had laboured hard to heal the division, was in the act of leaving when John O'Connell entered. On being told what had occurred, he became much excited, and exclaimed in an angry tone, 'No, father, we cannot unite with these men; wretched, ungrateful factionists as they are, we will crush them.' Poor O'Connell was prostrated; he looked at his son, then at Sir Colman, and addressing the latter, said, 'You see, Sir

These reports can only be received as approximations to the truth; what alone is certain is, that O'Connell at length recognised the fact that he must either make the Young Irelanders his own, or place them hopelessly in the wrong, on penalty of seeing his authority over the people disappear. When the Association met, he set himself to this task. To make them his own would involve the necessity of abandoning the Whig alliance, and checking the despotism of Mr. John O'Connell. To place them in the wrong might be an easier operation. He described the strides the famine had made, and the urgent need for union which it created:—

"Nothing was so likely to encourage an outbreak as the unhappy Young Ireland dissensions,—holding out hopes of succour from abroad and support from intellectual persons. If the people were led astray, those who were so valorous at nightly meetings and in daily talk would be the first to shrink from the conflict. But he did not desire to embitter the quarrel, his anxiety was to heal the breach. At the Rotunda meeting the Young Irelanders had disavowed the intention of using physical force; he wished they had gone further and disavowed the fact. Mr. Smith O'Brien, in his recent letter, reserved the sword, but the sword could not be reserved. Let every one understand that the sword could not be used, or be alluded to without illegality amounting to high treason. But he was willing to test the Young Irelanders; let them show that they gave up everything contrary to law, and he would concede everything that the law would permit. As public discussion only embarrassed such an experiment, he meant to propose a personal conference between Mr. O'Brien and himself, assisted by four lawyers, Sir Colman O'Loghlen and Mr. (now Lord) O'Hagan, Mr. O'Hea and Mr. Dillon. At least

Colman, I am powerless; there is my best beloved son; you hear what he has said; nothing can now be done.'"

they would understand each other for the future, and if they quarrelled they would know what it was about."*

The chorus in Conciliation Hall, which had sanctioned the expulsion of members of the committee and of the Association for expostulating with Mr. John O'Connell, and had applauded the treatment of the Dublin Remonstrants, received the proposal with vehement applause. They certainly desired a reconciliation, and would have assented to it on the most generous terms, but we were speedily warned that this was not what was in contemplation by the leaders. Dr. Cane, who was peculiarly well-informed on the secret counsels of Conciliation Hall, wrote to me :—

"If the conference should fail (as I think it will) in arranging differences, and cementing a proper reunion, then in the event of such failure all the discredit will be cast upon our friends. For God's sake, look well to this, and look to it as if the principal result of the conference was to escape the risk of such odium, as if the conference was *intended* to fail, and was merely a game to cast discredit somewhere."†

The external circumstances strengthened this suspicion. It was noted that during the proceedings of the day Mr. John O'Connell read a letter charging Young Ireland with being "the worst enemy of the country and religion," and that his official organ, the *Pilot*, never for

* Mr. O'Hagan declined to act, on the ground that questions were to be considered on which he concurred with neither of the parties, and consequently could not be a fit arbitrator between them. Mr. O'Connell, in reply, assured him that the conference would not involve him in any political arrangement whatsoever; all that was needed, was his assistance as a lawyer on a point of law. But he could not accept this view of the question, and persisted in declining.

† *Nation* Correspondence. Cane to Duffy, Kilkenny, Dec. 7.

a moment mitigated its practice of slander. But the hybrid character of O'Connell's speech was still more alarming; a sagacious man does not assail those whom he desires to conciliate; and this circumstance suggested the fear to men living far apart that the proposal was only a snare.*

The young men after careful consultation agreed to meet the proposal cordially. They declared in resolutions published in the newspapers that they were ready to confer on all points in dispute; but they must have a few days to consult O'Brien and their friends in the provinces, in order that whatever was done might be done by the whole body of Seceders. We opened communication immediately with every district which had declared against Conciliation Hall; and I privately informed O'Brien of the warnings we had received, and urged him to come to town and aid us with his advice.†

* Barry, who was then in Cork editing a paper (the *Southern Reporter*), wrote:—"Great difficulties would attend a reunion, such as you yourself suggest, but I have some doubt if any real one be at all desired or meant by O'Connell. His speech on the subject was the most shameful act he has yet been guilty of, and is of bad omen for the success of the proposed reunion." And Pigot, who was in London, wrote:—"O'Connell's speech on Monday was a gross, atrocious, wilful misrepresentation—mean, fraudulent, and false—of the resolution at the meeting yesterday week. Give it no quarter in the *Nation*. But yet I hope you will not suffer a single bad word to be inserted. Of dignity alone we stand in need to be thoroughly victorious. I want you before the negotiation begins, to get our men together, and make them discuss and definitively agree to some basis, and put it in words, all as a set of conditions. And then let the commissioners chosen pledge themselves to insist upon each and all of the points in the said basis, and to consider the same as instructions from the party they represent, and from which they have no power to depart under any circumstances, or on any terms whatever. Either you should draw up, and Dillon correct, the draft of a basis; or Dillon draw up, and you add to, and correct. Your power and Dillon's acuteness combined, will make us certain of a clearness and comprehensiveness, which is above all things most necessary (London, Dec. 10).

† "O'Connell spoke of the conference as one to settle *all* differences,

But he could not be induced to come. He had escaped from a position of painful responsibility, and was not eager to return to it; he was quite determined, indeed, not to return unless the practices which had disgusted and tortured him were abandoned. And he still clung to the belief, while O'Connell treated him as the leader of the revolt, that he was an umpire between the parties who might, perhaps, compose their differences.* We had complete confidence in O'Brien's integrity, and a lively personal regard for him, but we were not disposed to make him another O'Connell who carried the proxies of his party in his portfolio; nor did he desire such a position; and when he declined to come to our aid, we proceeded as best we could without him.

But our skilful opponent stole a march on us; O'Connell sent one of his friends, a Dublin priest,† to Cahirmoyle to make a separate overture to O'Brien, and had the triumph of reporting to the next meeting of the Association that his friendly overtures were rejected. What could he do more? He had gone all possible lengths, but it was quite in vain. A letter from his envoy confirmed this view of the mission: "The pro-

and O'Hea and O'Loghlen so understood it, and talked freely of the different reforms to be accomplished; and we, as you will see by our resolutions, never regarded it in any other light than an offer to settle *all* the questions at issue, and reduce the result to writing."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence: Duffy to O'Brien.

* "It is just as well that I should not see your answer to O'Connell until it is published. Let it emanate from, and express, the opinion of 'Young Ireland.' Until *forced* from a neutral position it was my pride to call myself 'Middle-aged Ireland;' and even still I fear that I have little claim to occupy a place among the more youthful band of patriots who are destined to win Ireland's freedom."—*O'Brien to Duffy.*

† Rev. Dr. Miley.

posal for a conference," he declared, "was not accepted but declined by Mr. O'Brien." O'Brien afterwards denied this statement in terms as strong as were compatible with courtesy. "I am not aware," he said, "that I left him under the impression that I was averse to accommodation. I mentioned to him that I proposed to submit to Mr. O'Connell the conditions on which I should feel myself disposed to return to Conciliation Hall as well as recommend others to co-operate with the Repeal Association." What he had positively refused was to go into the ridiculous question of physical force, which he described as merely a pretence to get rid of troublesome members. But the broad fact remained that there had been a mission, and that it had resulted in failure. Those who had accepted the overture, however, were more severely censured than the gentleman who appeared to decline it. It was melancholy to think, O'Connell declared, that Ireland had fallen into such a state of degradation that this trouble was a dissension between the Repeal Association on one hand, and the compositors' room of a newspaper on the other. He did not speak of Mr. O'Brien, for he had not involved himself in the party, but the rest, most respectable gentlemen to be sure, were merely writers for a newspaper.* He was ready, however, to make any con-

* An angry correspondent, scandalised at this illiberal talk, said he would not refer Mr. O'Connell to Benjamin Franklin the ambassador, or to Thiers, or Guizot, the Premiers for political journalists, but remind him that Daniel O'Connell when he was a young man edited a Dublin newspaper—Æneas M'Donnell's journal—for nearly a year. And if he did so to arouse the people in defence of their rights, was the same motive not permissible to the young men of the present generation?

cession short of principle, to receive back every one of them on an equal footing with himself if it could be done with safety.

The compositors' room took him at his word. He had put us in the wrong before the country which passionately desired reconciliation, and we were determined to put ourselves right. A meeting of the principal Seceders was immediately held at the *Nation* office. We had received letters or resolutions from forty districts specifying the terms on which they would return to Conciliation Hall, and we informed O'Connell, through James Haughton, that a deputation had been appointed to confer with him on the subject whenever he chose to receive them.* He consented to receive them immediately. The deputation failed to effect a reconciliation, but they completely accomplished the purpose of setting themselves right with the country. O'Connell had recently declared that he was determined to show who prevented a reconciliation, and on this point there was no longer any possibility of doubt among unprejudiced men. They reported in writing to an adjourned meeting of the Seceders in language of notable simplicity and courtesy. They had opened the interview by assuring

* "*Committeè Room, 'Nation' Office,*
15th December, 1846.

"MY DEAR MR. O'CONNELL.—I am requested to inform you, that at a meeting of the Seceders held this day, as above, the following gentlemen—Mr. Duffy, Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Gorman, and myself—were appointed as a deputation to wait upon you, and represent the feelings of the meeting. We shall be happy if you can appoint any hour this day to meet us.

"Yours faithfully,

"D. O'Connell, Esq., M.P." "JAMES HAUGHTON.

Mr. O'Connell that the Seceders anxiously desired to co-operate with him in bringing about a reconciliation on any terms creditable to the parties and useful to the country. Mr. O'Connell replied that he was quite ready to go into a conference on the legal question which must be settled before any other could be considered. The deputation consented that the legal question should be investigated in the first place, but they desired to be informed if this point were disposed of whether he intended that the conference should determine the other points at issue between the Association and the Seceders. Mr. O'Connell said if the legal question were decided against them they would not be members of the Association; the time, therefore, had not come, and might never come, to raise them. The deputation rejoined that they were instructed to ascertain with certainty, whether if the legal question should be decided in their favour he would then proceed to consider the other questions which had produced the Secession. Mr. O'Connell answered that the conference must be confined exclusively to the legal question. The deputation reminded him that in his speech proposing the conference he was reported to have suggested that it should settle "the points of difference between us." He declared that he had not said so, but directly the reverse; it was a misreport as he had never intended bringing any but the legal question before the conference. The deputation assured him that the settlement of the legal question would not bring back the Seceders who had retired on various other grounds.

Mr. O'Connell replied that if the Seceders returned they could, in their places in the Association, propose any reforms they thought necessary. But as this was a proposal to renew what had been described as "dissensions," it was manifestly out of the question; and, in conclusion, they offered him a statement of the reforms the Seceders thought essential, but he declined to read or receive it.*

There could no longer be any doubt what it was the Seceders desired, and the triumph of our absent friends at the vindication of their true position was intense. O'Brien, who feared that O'Connell consented to receive us only to place us in the wrong, and who doubtless thought he would succeed in doing so, now declared with generous enthusiasm that the measures taken against his advice had proved to be right and successful. "I acknowledge (he said), with the greatest satisfaction, that you have taken a course calculated to place the Irish Party in a much better position with reference to public opinion than that which it would have occupied

* The proposed reforms were that, in case of agreement, the Seceders should be restored to their original position and status in the Association; that the members of the managing committee should pledge themselves not to accept, nor to solicit for others, any office of emolument from the English Government; that, as persons of every religious persuasion were invited to join the Association, it was desirable to avoid the discussion of subjects calculated to excite religious dissension, reserving the right to remonstrate against substantial grievances affecting the religion of any class of Irishmen; that the Association should cease to circulate any newspaper; that a committee should be appointed to secure the election of Repealers in all Repeal constituencies at the coming General Election; that the conference should make arrangements for the publication and audit of the Repeal Fund, and for the trusteeship of all money and property of the Association; and that no paid officer should be a member of the committee, or be allowed to take any part in the public proceedings, except by direction of the committee.

if my counsel had been followed."* "I sympathise (Pigot wrote) with your sense of responsibility. It was indeed a daring step to try diplomacy with O'Connell. . . . Do not waste the *Nation* any more on him; the people will understand you well enough now, and you will have the January meeting. The account of Skibbereen was so frightful that it is haunting me in dreams and waking moments ever since. *Quosque Domine?*—It makes me shudder often and often." Outside our own ranks the local press admitted that the conference ought to have been on all questions in dispute. If we had consented to restrict it to one question no conceivable settlement of it would have brought back the Seceders. Martin, who had been expelled for insisting on the audit of the accounts, would not have retreated from that demand. Shea Lalor, who had retired because abusive language was common in the Hall, had not grown reconciled to that practice; those who had seceded because Dungarvan was abandoned to the Whigs, or because Repealers were silenced by appointments, would not have returned because it was declared permissible to applaud Bunker's Hill, or honour the Convention of Dungannon. The proposal to consider reforms after we had gone back would scarcely have contented the Dublin Remonstrants who, for suggesting

* "Limerick, 78, George Street, December 18, 1846.

"It is now quite manifest that O'Connell's object has been simply to place us in the wrong before the country. The best answer to him is—We will co-operate with you on terms which we believe to be those most conducive to the attainment of Repeal."—Cahirmoyle, Dec. 15th, O'Brien to Duffy.

reforms, had had their memorial flung in the gutter. But one good was achieved, the men who had been denounced as infidels and conspirators, and subject to a weekly mud volcano, would have been joyfully received back, if only they raised no inconvenient question on the policy and practices of the Association.

O'Connell wound up this controversy as he had wound up the controversy with the Federalists, by contempt and insult to the men whom he had wooed a few days before:—

"It is all over. There is an utter end to it. The Association will work on its way as well as it can without them, in total disregard, not to use a harsher term, though the use of a harsher term may be more applicable—of the paltry machinations and movements of the Little Ireland gang. I tell them this—I set them at defiance—and let them keep up as many dissensions as they please, and foment disaffection to no end, I shall still disregard them."

And again:—

"What crime has the Association committed that, in the first place, it should be condemned, and next handed over to such executioners as Duffy, Mitchel, and the other Young Irelanders? I would rather see the Association emptied of the last man than I would submit to their dictation."

The great Tribune who had encountered foot to foot, in an assembly where he had few friends, the most haughty patrician orator of the day, who had turned upon and disabled, with killing jibes, the great journal before whom soldiers and statesmen shrank abashed, who had overwhelmed with scorn the young adventurer who was at the outset of the most marvellous of parliamentary

careers, the man before whom the corrupt judge on the bench and the incompetent Minister in the midst of his majority had trembled, when he assailed them in the interest of his country, was no longer formidable, for he had abandoned that fount of inspiration.

Though the controversy was practically at an end, attempts were still made in letters and speeches to represent O'Brien as the opponent of reunion on any terms. The documents and correspondence which used to teach lessons of nationality, taught only that the Seceders were public enemies. It was as if locomotives designed to carry men to the next stage were suddenly turned into a barricade to stop the way. O'Brien, after long forbearance, set himself right with dignity and vigour, and once for all.*

It is not necessary to pursue in detail the history of the Repeal Association after this final rupture. For a short time O'Connell attended weekly, and read reports on the progress of the famine, but without suggesting any remedy beyond the assembly of a council of Irish proprietors in Dublin. In February, he went to London to attend Parliament, accompanied by his son, and the Association was committed to the care of the head Pacificator, and became a sort of political bedlam. In dismissing the question of reunion the *Nation* entreated that there might be no more controversy; there had been too much rancour, and too many reprisals; and the state of the country made controversy shameful.

* See note at the end of the chapter for O'Brien's account of the Secession and Meagher's reported retirement.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

I. O'Brien's Account of the Secession.

It was on the physical force question alone (he declared in a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*) that he refused to have any further parley; and he had refused because from the beginning it was only a pretence for pushing out men opposed to the Whig alliance. Immediately after the Secession, he had offered through Mr. O'Connell's son to bring about an accommodation if he would change his conduct with respect to the Young Irelanders. "But (he continued) Mr. O'Connell preferred to proceed in the career of which we have since witnessed the full development. He induced the Committee to stop the circulation of the *Nation*. Having failed to ruin the property of Mr. Gavan Duffy—whom I believe to be not only one of the ablest men in this kingdom, but also one of the most virtuous—he next arraigned him as guilty of high treason by a formal indictment, which was sustained by neither legal nor constitutional argument, but which was marked by all the perverted ingenuity of a crafty Attorney-General. He has since endeavoured, by the most ungenerous means, to fix on Mr. Duffy, and upon his friends, the charge of infidelity in regard to religious belief." "Had the real difference been composed (he added), he would have returned to Conciliation Hall, notwithstanding the insults he had been subject to in that place." The reforms he desired corresponded with those suggested by the Seceders, with the necessary addition that no member should be expelled except by a vote of the Association after a week's notice. He had felt much dissatisfaction respecting the method of managing the funds; he was willing, however, that Mr. O'Connell should continue to be sole treasurer and trustee on condition that no payment should be made except on an order of the Committee. The funds, it will be understood, were a subject on which there was much soreness among the Seceders. John Dillon, shortly afterwards in a public document, described some of the difficulties which the Young Irelanders had to encounter on the point during their connection with the Association. "On one occasion (he said) they succeeded in obtaining a vote of the Committee nominating three respectable merchants in the city to inspect the treasurer's accounts, but, although two years have elapsed since that vote was passed, the accounts have never been submitted to the gentlemen named."—*Address of the Committee of the Irish Party.*

II. Negotiations with O'Connell.

It would be difficult at present, I fancy, to find any one who does not understand that the return of the Young Irelanders to Conciliation Hall was not desired, and would not have been permitted. But at the time there were still honest doubters here and there. The Rev. Michael Lane, a P.P. in the county Cork, will personify one class of them. He assured the Repeal Association that, for his part, "he strongly suspected the Young Irelanders were in the pay of the Castle" (forgetting that the Castle was on his own side); but even a man of ability and public spirit like Dr. Maginn, the Bishop of Derry, had not yet, apparently, awakened to the actual state of the case. I find in his "Life" by McGee, a correspondence between him and me at this period (January, 1847) which illustrates the difficulty a man has, on any evidence, in breaking away from his prepossessions. "Having had the pleasure of an early acquaintance with your

respectable family," the Bishop wrote, "I do candidly say that I took an interest in everything that appertained to you, and was proud, as a Northern, of the exceedingly able paper which you edited. Since, however, it has become an instrument of dissension, advocating the eternal separation of those whom a common name and object should unite in the strongest sentiments of brotherhood, and aspersing the sacred character of one so justly dear, even had he a thousand faults, to every genuine Irishman, to retain it longer must seem a dereliction of duty. If you were to take the advice of one who wishes you well, I would, in all earnestness, recommend for the good of your country a sacrifice of your own cherished opinions, a forgetfulness and a forgiveness of whatever wrongs you may think you have endured, and a speedy reconciliation with the Liberator."

"I must remind your lordship," I rejoined, "that it was not I, nor my friends who commenced the quarrel; nor is it our fault that it continues. We would willingly have gone back to the Association if Mr. O'Connell had consented to a fair audit of the accounts for the future (they have been *unfairly* audited and disbursed hitherto); and to a *bonâ fide*, honest agitation for Repeal. His refusal of these concessions left us no option but to join what appears to us (who have seen the working of the system for years) the mere pretence of a Repeal agitation, conducted with personal objects alone; or to take the course we have taken. . . I trust, and indeed feel assured, that time will convince your lordship that the Seceders had and have no other object than the honest service of their country." And, as we shall see, time did convince him effectually.

III. Meagher's reported Retirement.

A belief sprang up at this time that, as reunion was impossible, Meagher, in despair, would abandon political life. I wrote to him immediately to ascertain the fact, and learned, as I expected, that the report was untrue. He only meditated spending the winter in London; and even that design, which would have been ill-timed, he did not carry out.

"It gives me such true delight to hear from you that I lose no time in qualifying myself to receive another letter like that which rendered my breakfast so agreeable this morning. As to my winter quarters—to keep up the military style—it has certainly been my intention to fix them in London; and I'll tell you why when I go up to town. Smyth was incorrect in saying that I intended to pass over to England without returning to see you; I had all along determined to go by Dublin, and it will afford me very sincere pleasure in meeting you all towards the latter end of next month. My 'love affair' has not (as you seem to think) in the least—not in the smallest degree—altered my intentions; nor does it involve, however it may eventuate, the abandonment of my plans and pursuits. Very far from it; I never was more ardently anxious in the cause, never more strongly resolved to work for it and determined to be of service to it, than I am at present. And if I do transport myself for the winter, it is not to idle or amuse myself, but with the design to employ and improve myself, and to do so zealously and earnestly.

. . . . "By-the-bye, I see that Hogan's statue has arrived; the O'Connell of Mallow will upbraid the O'Connell of Chesham Place. That statue should not be uncovered in these times: it will be a stern accuser; or if it be uncovered, it would be well to place a copy of the 'Peace Resolutions' in the hand that hurls defiance at the Saxon. Some of my Whig

acquaintances came down from Dublin the other day; they're in excessive glee—invitations to viceregal dinners supersede in their eyes the necessity for Repeal, and Lord Bessborough's claret, they say, will float Ireland into the haven of prosperity! A knife and fork embroidered on a napkin, with the name of Ponsonby in each corner, suspended from a viceregal spit, would be an appropriate substitute for the green silk banner that hangs behind the chair in Conciliation Hall at present."

IV. Clergymen who Approved of the Secession.

I take pleasure in recording the names of clergymen who, when the position of the Seceders was at its worst, had the courage to take part openly with them:—

Very Rev. Dr. Nagle, V.G., P.P., Gort.
Rev. Philip Foy, Sherlock.
Rev. P. Hennessy, Scarif, County Clare.
Rev. P. Langan, Ardcath, County Meath.
Rev. Thomas Maloney, Milltown, Malby.
Rev. W. J. D. Walker, O.S.D., Newbridge.
Rev. P. O'Farrell, C.C., Navan.
Rev. M. McMahon, P.P., Doonas, Limerick.
Rev. Mr. Sullivan, C.C.
Rev. Mr. Egan, C.C.
Rev. James O'Reilly, St. Mary's, Boston.
Rev. Edward Burall (brother of the Bishop of Cincinnati, and editor of the *Catholic Telegraph*).
Rev. Nicholas Coghlan, Waterford.
Rev. Dr. O'Connor, Limerick.
Rev. Mr. O'Mullane, Cork.
Rev. John Gillon, Glasgow.
Rev. E. Smith, Ellingham, England.
Rev. Mr. Mulcachy, Newcastle, County Limerick.
Rev. Daniel Synan, Rathkeale.
Rev. Thomas Leahy, Adare.
Rev. Thos. O'Carroll, D.D., Westland Row.

And two prominent members of the party—

Rev. C. P. Meehan, SS. Michael and John, Dublin, and
Rev. John Kenyon, Templederry.

The priests who gave them encouragement without committing themselves openly belong to a different category. After the French Revolution it was no longer possible to count their supporters among the younger priests.

CHAPTER II.

THE IRISH CONFEDERATION, THE IRISH COUNCIL, AND THE DEATH OF O'CONNELL.

THE condition of Ireland at the opening of the year 1847 is one of the most painful chapters in the annals of mankind. An industrious and hospitable race were now in the pangs of a devouring famine. Deaths of individuals, of husband and wife, of entire families were becoming common. The potato-blight had spread from the Atlantic to the Caspian, but there was more suffering in one parish of Mayo than in all the rest of Europe. From Connaught, where distress was greatest, there came batches of inquests, with the horrible verdict "died of starvation." In some cases the victims were buried "wrapped in a coarse coverlet," a coffin being too costly a luxury. The living awaited death with a listlessness which was at once tragic and revolting. Women, with dead children in their arms, were seen begging for a coffin to bury them.

Béranger has touched a thousand hearts by the picture of "Pauvre Jacques," who, when the tax-gatherer came in the king's name, was discovered dead on his miserable pallet. But at Skibbereen, in the fruitful county of Cork, whose seaports were thronged with vessels laden with corn, cattle, and butter for England,

the rate-collector told a more tragic tale. Some houses he found deserted; the owners had been carried to their graves. In one cabin there was no other occupant than three corpses; in a once prosperous home a woman and her children had lain dead and unburied for a week; in the fields a man was discovered so fearfully mangled by dogs that identification was impossible. The Relief Committee of the Society of Friends described the state of the town in language which it was hard to read with dry eyes. The people were dying of the unaccustomed food which mocked their prayer for daily bread, and were carried to the graveyard in a coffin, from which the benevolent strangers who had come to their relief had to drop them, like dead dogs, that there might be a covering for the next corpse in its turn:—

"This place is one mass of famine, disease, and death. The poor creatures, hitherto trying to exist on one meal per day, are now sinking under fever and bowel complaints, unable to come for their soup, which is not fit for them. Rice is what their whole cry is for, but we cannot manage this well, nor can we get the food carried to the houses from dread of infection. I have got a coffin, with moveable sides, constructed to convey the bodies to the churchyard, in calico bags prepared, in which the remains are wrapped up. I have just sent this to bring the remains of a poor creature to the grave, *who having been turned out of the only shelter she had—a miserable hut—perished the night before last in a quarry.*"

The people saw the harvest they had reared carried away to another country without an effort, for the most part, to retain it. The sole food of the distressed class was Indian meal, which had paid freight and storage in

England, and had been obtained in exchange for English manufactures.* Under a recent law, a peasant who accepted public relief forfeited his holding, and thousands were ejected under this cruel provision. But landowners were not content with one process alone; they closed on the people with ejectments, turned them on the roads, and plucked down their roof-trees. In more than one county rents falling due in November for land, which no longer yielded food to the cultivator, were enforced in January. In the South-West, the peasantry had made some frantic efforts to clutch their harvest and to retaliate for their sufferings in blind vengeance, but the law carried a sharp sword. Eight counties or parts of counties were proclaimed, and a Special Commission, after a brief sitting in Clare and Limerick, left eleven peasants for the gallows. Chief Justice Blackburn took occasion to note that "the state of things in '47 was exactly that described by an Act passed in 1776." The disease was permanent, so were the symptoms. One well-head of Irish discontent was English prejudice, which refuses to listen to any complaint till it threatens to become dangerous.

It was a fearful time for men who loved their country, not only with deep affection, but with a wise and forecasting interest. A revolution of the worst type was in progress. Not the present alone, but the future was being laid waste. The marvellous reform accomplished by Father Mathew, the self-reliance which had grown up in the era of monster meetings, and the moral teach-

* There were soup-kitchens in Mayo, and one or two other places.

ing of Davis and his friends, were being fast swallowed up by this calamity. The youth and manhood of the middle classes were scrambling for pauper places from the Board of Works, and the peasants were being transformed into mendicants by process of law. These calamities, related of a distant and savage tribe, would move a generous heart; but seeing them befall our own people, the children of the same mother, and foreseeing all the black, unfathomable misery they foreshadowed, it was hard to preserve the sober rule of reason.

The gentry, who were responsible in the first place for the protection of the people, from whom they drew their income, insisted that the calamity was an imperial one and ought to be borne out of the exchequer of the Empire.* It was an equitable claim. If there was no irresistible title of brotherhood, at lowest the stronger nation had snatched away from the weaker the power of helping itself, and still drew away during this terrible era half-a-million of pounds every month in the shape of absentee-rents. The demand was put aside contemptuously. The claim of the Nationalists to re-enter on the management of their own affairs, since it was plain England could not manage them successfully, was treated as sedition. We were proffered, instead of our own resources, which were ample—

> "Alms from scornful hands, to hands in chains,
> Bitterer to taste than death."

* "If the calamity with which the inscrutable wisdom of the Almighty has visited this country be not treated as national, the union between Great Britain and Ireland is a farce; and I firmly believe that ere long every Unionist and Repealer must join issue on this point."—Mr. E. W. Chetwood, of Wood Brook, to the *Evening Mail.*

All the nations of the earth were appealed to, and they gave generously; but the result was far from being proportionate to the need. During the year just ended the contributions fell short of £2,000 a week.* And it was not forgotten that after the great fire of London, when the citizens were in deep distress, the Irish contributed 20,000 fat cattle for their relief, which at their present value would amount to a sum greater than England and Europe sent to the aid of Ireland in 1846.

To lie down and die, like cattle in a murrain, was base. No people are bound to starve while their soil produces food cultivated by their own hands. No other people in Europe would have submitted to such a fate. But the leader whom they were accustomed to follow had involved himself in a tangle of false doctrines by his unhappy Peace Resolutions, and he exhorted them to endure all with patience and submission. His son had the amazing intrepidity to add that if they starved

* There were many generous individual donations. The Queen gave £2,000, the Sultan of Turkey and the King of Hanover £1,000 each, the Duke of Devonshire, the Bank of England, and various other banks, the East India Company, the Corporation of London, and the Worshipful Company of Grocers, the same sum each. The contribution of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge exceeded £4,000, and the Wesleyan Methodists gave £5,000. The Society of Friends collected between £40,000 and £50,000, of which one Friend contributed anonymously £1,000. From St, Petersburgh there came £2,644, from Bombay £9,000, from Mauritius £3,000, from Madras £2,150, from South Australia—a new settlement at that time—£2,000. Holland and Denmark, Florence and Malta, Barbadoes and Jamaica, Newfoundland and Van Dieman's Land, and various other foreign countries and British possessions contributed liberally. The London press, and several regiments and shops made special contributions. But the whole amount contributed in the first year of the famine fell short of the subscriptions sent from the Australian Colonies alone for the Irish Famine of 1879.

with complete resignation the Repeal of the Union was near at hand.*

On the Relief Committees, doctors, clergymen, and country gentlemen bore the burden of the work, but a multitude of the gentry stood apart, as if the transaction did not concern them. They were busy in transmitting the harvest to England, or clearing the population off their estates. The English officials in Ireland accused them of jobbing in public works, of quartering their relations and dependents on the Relief Fund as overseers, and, in some extreme cases, of obtaining grants for their own families of money designed for the suffering poor on their estates.† The benevolence of the minority could not counterbalance these odious offences, and deadly hatred was sown, which has since borne an abundant harvest.

With the new year the Seceders entered on a new career. For twice twelve months there had not been a step made towards self-government; nothing effectual

* After the opening of the session of Parliament in '47, O'Connell no longer promised effectual aid from the Government. He had come to recognise the tragic fact that after all his services and sacrifices on their behalf there was no such aid forthcoming. At the beginning of February he wrote from London:—"I am sorry to inform you that any prospect of relief—I mean of substantial and comprehensive relief—from Parliament is, in my judgment, daily diminishing. There is, to be sure, a great deal of sympathy and good feeling both in and out of the House, and generally a very sincere desire that something efficient should be done to relieve the horrible destitution of the Irish people: but there are also many obstacles and an unwillingness to place upon the British people the burthens absolutely necessary to give efficient relief to Irish misery."

† "The barony of which Belmullet is the principal place, is the darkest corner in Ireland. In some instances broken-down landowners and their families were receiving rations, while their tenants were starving."—*Edinburgh Review* (Article by Sir Charles Trevelyan, Secretary of the Treasury).

had been done to counteract the famine; the mass of the people were bewildered and hopeless; the best of the middle class were falling into apathy or despair; and whatever national feeling was still evoked, promoted no practical end; it evaporated like steam which turns no machinery. To arrest the ruin of the national cause, and to mass, if possible, the power of the people for their own defence, the Seceders determined to found an Association. It was the experiment of men sick of the misery around them, and willing to do or suffer anything which might mitigate it.

They founded an Association; but that was only one experiment of many. They tried in succession, as we shall see, every agency which afforded any prospect of saving the people—the gentry, the middle class, the young Conservatives, the Ulster Presbyterians, the people themselves. They knew the miracles of courage and devotion a nation has sometimes performed in extremity, and they did not dare to doubt that Ireland in this supreme crisis would save herself if she were shown the way.

On the thirteenth of January, 1847, the Irish Confederation held its first meeting. I was authorised to invite Robert Holmes to take the chair; but though he had just given important help to the national cause by a pamphlet on the Case of Ireland, he would not consent to enter on political agitation in his eighty-second year. The programme had been carefully considered. When it was determined to organise, Dr. Cane

wrote to warn us that the enemy we had most to fear was faction:—

"Our fate as a party hangs on this meeting; it must be cautiously organised for the platform, thoroughly organised for the auditory; no room left for intruding a gang of rowdies to shout down the speakers or confuse the meeting: depend upon it some such effort will be made. The desperadoes will play a desperate game and stoop to every thing. . . Ponder well over the proceedings. If possible no recrimination, no abuse of any person or any thing belonging to the Association we have left. If the Liberator must be named, let the past be viewed with regret, but not in anger. . . The Protestants are bending their heads and opening their ears—we must draw them towards us now or never."*

The policy of the Confederation was substantially the policy of the Repeal Association, honestly and vigorously worked out—a programme which the leading Young Irelanders had repeatedly declared to be sufficient for its purpose. And it was sufficient, if the whole nation could only be gathered under one banner. An island teeming with natural wealth, ramparted by the ocean, inhabited by an intelligent and industrious people, had a right to self-government, had power to win it, and strength to keep it; and the state of the nation at the moment called for a supreme effort for this purpose; for self-government was the only alternative to ruin.†

* *Nation* Correspondence—Cane to Duffy.

† The Chairman of the opening meeting was John Shea Lalor, the Honorary Secretaries John Dillon and Charles Gavan Duffy (Meagher shortly afterwards took my place). The rules, which contained no declaration equivalent to the Peace Resolutions, were pronounced to be legal and sufficient by Jonathan Henn, Q.C., to whom they were submitted; and

The new society began its work in a spirit of generous forbearance befitting men who hoped to mould many hostile classes into a nation. There were no attacks, no reprisals. And in a spirit of generous self-sacrifice, also, in view of the poverty of the people, it was resolved that subscriptions should be purely voluntary, and that the founders, if necessary, would themselves bear the cost of the movement. At the opening meeting O'Brien cited with exultation, the pamphlet of the venerable patriot, who having all his life scorned the arts of the courtier, came forward in his old age to vindicate the rights of the country. "The true leader of the new movement was not Smith O'Brien or Gavan Duffy, but Robert Holmes."

Much eloquent speaking may be taken for granted; these young men, who were the forlorn hope of freedom, taught, exhorted, warned the comatose nation till they slowly revived a soul under the ribs of provincial death. Ten thousand members were enrolled, the flower of the independent young men of Ireland, who put their hearts and souls, "all they had, were, or might become," into the struggle; but the gentry only furnished a few stray volunteers, the bulk of the middle class stood apart, the Catholic clergy were unfriendly, and the people in their suffering and despair scarcely knew what was going on. The Government, indeed, set up a depôt for recruits, more intelligible to men in danger of starvation than

though the safety of the Association was not nervously guarded, the Confederation was never prosecuted. The names of the original Committee will be found in a note at the end of the chapter.

theories of nationality. To superintend the new roads an immense staff of officials was necessary, and, after a little time, more men were receiving salary as pay-clerks, gangers, and inspectors of works, than were enrolled from first to last in the ranks of the Confederation.* But they worked on steadily, in the sure confidence of turning the minority of the nation in the end into an overwhelming majority. The mistake they made was to believe that this could be done at a bound. While O'Connell lived it was inevitable that a large party should adhere to him, right or wrong. In fact, the generation going out of existence, and the generation coming in, constituted this majority and minority. With one were authority and experience, with the other faith and enthusiasm—forces sure to prevail in the end; but they are not the agents of a day, but of a generation.

In such an emergency action was more essential than teaching, for action is the only lesson universally intelligible; and they seized the first opportunity to perform the duty of a national council. Sir Valentine Blake, a Repealer of the section who begged places, vacated his seat for Galway to make room for the Solicitor-General.† If a popular constituency elected a member of the Government who treated the national calamity with a combination of insolence and imbecility, complaints were useless. They determined to contest

* The Confederates were 10,000, the employés under the Public Works Act, 11,000.

† Mr. James Henry Monahan.

the seat, and to render a contest certain started a local candidate,* but announced that if the constituency preferred any other genuine Repealer of either section they would support him. O'Connell advised that Mr. Antony O'Flaherty should be adopted, provided he "would act under the guidance of the old pilot, and eschew the society of the Young Irelanders;" and, as his character stood fair, the Confederation resolved to support him. They despatched a deputation to the City of the Tribes to aid the national candidate, and the Association despatched another.† The *Pilot*, which was still fed on Castle advertisements, openly supported the Solicitor-General; and O'Connell found it necessary to declare that it did not represent his opinion or wishes in the business. The deputation remained for a fortnight. They won the independent tradesmen and shopkeepers; but the Government, with their money and patronage, the local gentry with their ejectments and *haberes*, secured the poverty-stricken fishermen of

* Mr. Francis Comyn of Woodstock, a member of the Council of the Confederation.

† The Confederate deputation consisted of Dillon, Meagher, Mitchel, O'Gorman, Doheny, and Barry. Meagher, in a note to one of his most devoted adherents in Waterford (T. W. Condon), intimated the spirit in which the enterprise was undertaken. "I had not one moment to spare. Mr. Duffy's marriage, and the preparation for it, threw additional trouble (if I can call it trouble) upon the few members of the Confederation who were in town. Mr. Dillon, Mr. Doheny, and Mr. O'Gorman left town last week for Galway, and the business of the Council consequently devolved upon five or six. . . . I go down with Mr. Mitchel to-morrow morning to the battle-field. May God give us success; the Devil will give it to the others if they succeed, for the Treasury gold is flying thick and fast amongst the people." After the contest was over, he wrote to the same correspondent: "The Trades are a noble body of men—full of truth, activity, and daring; and would fight in the trenches, I have no doubt, as bravely and as passionately as they have done upon the hustings."

Cladagh. A thousand votes were polled, and the Government won only by a majority of four. Dillon, in a despatch to the Confederation, described the agencies by which the victory was secured: "Enormous bribery, horrible perjury, unlimited exercise of landlord intimidation to coerce tenants, the opening of a vast market-place to corrupt landlords."

"The power of the State was applied without disguise or decency in the service of the Government candidate. Throughout the election the town was filled by armed servants of the Crown, who acted as election agents for the Solicitor-General. Bodies of infantry marched through the booths while the polling proceeded, for the purpose, it is presumed, of overawing the electors, and of suppressing the legitimate expression of public opinion; while parties of cavalry scoured the country for voters, and conducted them to Mr. Monahan's tally-room. . . Your deputation have the strongest reason to believe that large sums have been expended in bribing on the part of the Solicitor-General. . . . Several persons refused to take the bribery oath after they had been brought up to vote, and publicly acknowledged that they had the money of the Solicitor-General in their pockets."

The gentry improved on the example of the officials:—

"A smith, who resided on the estate of Menlough, of which Sir Thomas Blake is the nominal landlord, voted for Mr. O'Flaherty. That night his house was levelled, and his family left without shelter; and it has been alleged that this baronet indulged in the mean revenge of prohibiting all the tenants of the estate from giving this poor man or any of his children a night's shelter."

But we had reason to fear that even baser agencies

were at work. Immediately after the election one of the deputation from Conciliation Hall—Mr. Fitzpatrick—was appointed Attorney-General for the Cape of Good Hope by the learned gentleman he was sent down to oppose.* The Confederation petitioned against Mr. Monahan's return, and undertook, on peril of heavy costs, to establish corrupt practices against a minister of the Crown. He escaped exposure by a preliminary decision on a mere technicality.† But the battle had been so stubbornly fought that at the next election the seat was relinquished to Mr. O'Flaherty without a contest. This was the first work the Confederation had taken in hand.

* It was noted also—for men were too angry and indignant to be punctilious—that at the same time two close connections of Mr. John O'Connell received appointments: his brother-in-law was made a stipendiary magistrate, and his cousin by marriage Surveyor of the Admiralty; and the magnanimity of the Solicitor-General in promoting his opponents was naturally much admired. The contest led, among other results, to a hostile message; and London critics declared that it was only the ordinary Galway recreation of "pistols and coffee for two." The origin of this familiar saying, which has, in fact, no more connection with Galway than with Gotham, I afterwards—I fancy—accidentally discovered. Breakfasting in a restaurant at Brussels, I saw two officers walk hurriedly into the room, and heard one of them whisper to a waiter, in tones which might easily be supposed to be mysterious and significant, "*Je voudrais du café et des pistolets pour deux à l'instant.*" On inquiry I found that *pistolet* is the local name for a kind of fancy bread, on which the military gentlemen meant to breakfast."

† The petition was settled in London by Mr. Chisholm Anstey and Mr. Pigot. The sureties—Mr. Meagher and Mr. Gavan Duffy—swore in the form prescribed by counsel that they were *bonâ fide* worth the sum of £500 each; but the Examiner of Recognisances held that they ought to have declared that they were "seised or possessed of real or personal property" to that amount. It was contended that the expressions were identical, and had been so employed before the courts of law, and that the Act prescribed no particular form. O'Brien moved that time be given to amend the recognisance, but it was held that the decision of the Examiner was final; and we have since become familiar with the fact that where Irish ends are to be thwarted the authorities of the House of Commons do not stand upon trifles.

Simultaneously with the birth of the Confederation, the long-promised conference of landed proprietors at last took place in Dublin.* They had evaded their duty month after month, and their laggard action, nearly a year too late, was attributed to the determination of the Government to make Irish property responsible for the support of Irish poverty. However it originated, the Conference was such an assembly as had not been seen in Ireland since the Union. Nearly twenty peers, more than thirty members of Parliament, and at least six hundred gentlemen of name and station, took part in it. It represented the rank and wealth of the country beyond controversy, and embraced Tories and Nationalists, Catholics and Protestants. The Conservative journals heralded it with the declaration that Ireland was not governed, and must govern itself. And no doubt it might have been such a Convention as that one which was led by Mirabeau, or such a one as at an earlier date was inspired by Patrick Henry, or by Henry Grattan, had it found and accepted an adequate leader. The Government looked on it with no friendly eye, and almost the only conspicuous supporter of the Administration who took a part in it was O'Connell.

The proceedings were marked by unbroken unanimity, and the general purpose of the business transacted was useful and generous. The Conference recommended the creation of an Irish Party for Irish purposes, to save the kingdom from impending ruin. It called on the Government to suspend the Navigation Laws (under which food

* January 14, 1847.

could be carried into the country only in British ships, or ships of the exporting country), and the Corn Laws, and to sacrifice any sum that might be necessary to save the lives of the people. It renewed the recommendation, so often made in vain, that the navy might be employed in carrying corn from foreign ports.* And it acknowledged the justice of imposing as a charge on landed property all money advanced by the Treasury for reproductive works, but protested against making it responsible for sums wasted on ill-advised and unprofitable undertakings. If this protest was at bottom a selfish one, it was substantially just, and it was welcome to Nationalists, because it was founded on the repudiation of ignorant foreign dictation in our domestic affairs. Towards Tenant-Right the Conference made an advance —considerable, for an assembly of nobles and squires. It was admitted that tenants in case of ejectment ought to be compensated for their improvements; and it was recommended that absentee proprietors should be subject to a special tax. To tax absentees was strictly equitable; but the leaders of the Conference must have known that it was entirely impracticable. The great nobles, whose duty to Ireland consists in appointing an agent and drawing an income, are supreme in Irish affairs. In every serious emergency they intervene with decisive effect. They may be forced to sell their estates, but we know, by the experience of twenty genera-

* Lord John Russell had the intrepidity to state his real objection to this course: "it would be a great discouragement to individual shipowners."

tions, that they cannot be forced to perform their duties. The smaller absentees might be whipped home by a tax, but the aim of nationalists at that time was rather to erect a prosperous nation, to which men would return as spontaneously as blood flows to the heart.

A Conservative gentleman who took part in these deliberations has left his private and entirely honest judgment on them. Dr. Maunsell, who advocated a Rotatory Parliament a couple of years earlier, was one of the writers of the *Mail*. He had been an Orangeman, but was at bottom a Whig of the Revolution of '88; his generous instincts and cultivated intellect, and, more than these, his sympathy with the country, would have made him an avowed Repealer, but for his fears of Catholic ascendancy. As it was, he vibrated between secret desire and vague apprehension. That such a man who had long battled with O'Connell should be suspicious of him was inevitable; but his state of mind illustrates in a significant manner the opportunity which existed at this time—as the Young Irelanders contended—for winning the Conservative party to a more decisive nationality. The day after the meeting he wrote in his Private Diary:—

"I had the pleasure of assisting yesterday in the most important demonstration, and what, if not marred, will be the most important transaction that has occurred in Ireland for half a century. In the Rotunda—in the very room consecrated by the meetings of the Volunteers of 1782—there were yesterday assembled eighteen Peers, thirty-seven Members of the House of Commons, and about 700 of the magistracy and gentry of every county in the kingdom, who solemnly and unanimously pledged

themselves to abandon party strife, and to work together for the good of their common country. The chair was taken by the Marquis of Ormonde on the motion of the Earl of Charlemont, and Lord Farnham. The first resolution was moved by George A. Hamilton, and seconded by Daniel O'Connell; the last resolution by James H. Hamilton and W. Smith O'Brien, and in all thirty-six distinct propositions were agreed to without division or discussion. Oh! may God grant that this blessed union shall endure even to the close of the coming session of Parliament. There is wanting but so short a period of peace and concord among her children to give Ireland an impulse in the course of civilisation that will carry her beyond the influence of her national crimes and misfortunes. But can any reasonable man, acquainted with the past, hope for so glorious a future? How often have similar, though never so promising, demonstrations as that of yesterday passed away and left scarce a trace in our history? I own I fear the baleful influence of O'Connell, and, notwithstanding the apparent cordiality of his words yesterday, I thought I could perceive marks of an inclination to spoil the plans of all who dared to serve their country without his permission. Dr. Gray and Sir C. O'Loghlen owned to similar suspicions, and they know him better than I do. But let us hope for better things."

The project of an Irish party independent of English interests alarmed the Government, and was scornfully denounced in the official press. That Irish gentlemen should habitually take counsel together on Irish questions, and hold them superior to the claims of Government or Opposition, was regarded as incredible Quixotism; and it was hinted that the aim of the landed proprietors was simply to make a good bargain for themselves. Mitchel repudiated this cynical theory in the *Nation*. On the eve of the Conference he declared that we refused to join in this essentially Whiggish outcry against the

Irish gentry; instead of welcoming the overture of the Whigs to save them from the landlords, the people ought to pray that the landlords might have the grace to save them from the Whigs. As for the Young Irelanders, they were of various schools of opinion, and certainly did not as a body consider the ruin of the landed gentry to be the best remedy, or any remedy at all, for Irish ills.* This was his settled opinion at the opening of 1847.

But the project of a party, which should disregard the interests of Whig and Tory, only flourished in the soil from which it sprang. Transferred to London it did not long survive in that unfriendly atmosphere; and there was reason to fear that the Whig journalists understood Irish landlords better than we did. The measures which the Conference recommended were one after another abandoned or ignored; and proposals of a kindred character were negatived by Irish votes.

When Parliament assembled, the first duty of the Government was to explain and justify their Irish policy. It was done with hard and brutal cynicism. In the Queen's speech the unparalleled horrors prevailing in Ireland were noticed as the unpleasant incident known to statisticians as "increased mortality." There was increased mortality in that part of the United Kingdom. The unproductive works invented by foreign administra-

* "'Young Ireland,' or the 'Irish Party,' or those whom the *Daily News* calls physical force men, are of no single school of politics; there are amongst them Conservatives, moderate Reformers, levelling Democrats; and that they do not, as a body, consider the ruin of the landed gentry to be the best remedy, or any remedy at all, for Irish ills."—Mitchel, *Nation*, January 23rd, 1847.

tors were defended by precedent; the poor-law system already in operation cost a million annually, and the work done under it, it was suggested, could scarcely be called reproductive; which indeed was true, and an aggravation of the wrong, for this, too, was an institution framed in disregard of Irish opinion. But, good or bad, the system was about to be abandoned. It withdrew the people from agricultural labour, whereby rents for next year were imperilled, and this was a danger calling for prompt remedy. The half-million of labourers on public works would be dismissed in successive batches and no further works undertaken. An Act would be introduced to substitute a new method of relief. A committee would be established in each electoral district, which would be empowered to levy rates, and authorised to receive subscriptions and donations. With the funds so procured they might purchase food and distribute it to the distressed without any longer applying a labour test. The guardians of the poor would be required to grant relief in the workhouses to infirm and disabled persons; and the Commissioners, in such cases as they thought fit, might allow rations to be issued to the able-bodied poor for whom there was no accommodation in the workhouse. The proposal to lend money to the farmers to purchase seed for next year was not admissible; but £50,000 would be lent to the landlords for this purpose, which they could distribute at their discretion. A suggestion that in cases where the landlords neglected to buy seed a first lien on the growing crop might be granted to the seedsman who supplied the

farmer, was rejected as an invasion of the rights of property.

The new proposal was, in effect, that Ireland should bear the burden on her own shoulders. The famine was not to be treated as an imperial calamity, and still less as a national one, in which the people who had to endure it would be free to choose and to apply the remedy. There was no pretence that this system would save the people from destruction. No sum that could be raised by poor-rate in a country so impoverished would alone be sufficient for that purpose. Dr. Whately is said to have described the expedient as granting a hungry dog liberty to eat his own tail. It was suggested that the poor of the country were now to be supported by the property of the country; but it was not strictly so, for half the poor-rate fell on the occupier. The landlords had notice of what they had to expect, and the hints of statesmen were supplemented by the plain speaking of Mr. Roebuck. Parliament, he said, had been legislating against the Irish people for three hundred years, in the interest of the Irish landlords. He wished to see the people of Ireland happy, but he did not know that their landlords contributed to that result. His verdict was: if they were willing to maintain the poor on their estates, let them remain; if not, let them be swept away."

Lord John Manners, sometimes spokesman of Young England in those days, suggested that the remedy employed by other European nations in time of scarcity ought to be tried—to retain the home-grown corn. Within ten days there were seven-and-twenty English

vessels in the Seine freighted with wheat grown on these islands. The proposal, which was ill-suited to the temper of the House of Commons, was passed over in silence.

Experienced persons predicted that this policy would end in the destruction of nearly two millions of the people, and the Government did not contradict this estimate.* That is to say, Ireland, while her soil teemed with food, while she was partner with the richest nation in Europe, while a single life was not sacrificed in any other country visited by the blight, would lose more men by starvation than England lost in her contest with Spain, or her contest with France, or in all her domestic struggles from the Wars of the Roses to the War of the Long Parliament. The deaths in a week at this ratio would average the population of a parliamentary borough; in a month they would exceed the muster of a great army. And English statesmen admitted that they must perish, because to save them would cost more than it was convenient to expend. In the cyclopædia of human suffering and human tyranny is there anything to match this fact?

O'Brien's suggestion to employ the people on railways instead of degrading them into paupers, was taken

* "It is estimated by Relief Committees, and the estimate is said to be admitted by Cabinet ministers, that the Irish famine will probably kill two million people this year. The sum of misery is so great that one can hardly understand it without going into particulars. Two million in the twelvemonth—men, women, and children—that is 5,479 a day, 228 an hour, and four in little more than a minute. We state a fact known in political circles, that two million deaths in Ireland this year from hunger, and disease arising from hunger, is the present reckoning of persons connected with Her Majesty's Government."—*Nation.*

up by Lord George Bentinck, the leader of the Tory secession from Peel, who submitted a well-considered scheme to parliament for this purpose. He proposed a public loan of sixteen millions to be re-lent to Irish railway companies in the proportion of £2 for every £1 of share capital paid up and profitably expended. Some of the English railway capitalists affirmed that such a loan might be easily raised, and would in the end, not cost England a shilling; and the most successful of them* declared his willingness to risk his entire fortune in the experiment. Cork and Limerick petitioned in favour of the scheme, the Confederation called on the Irish members to support it; and at the moment parties were so nicely balanced, that the result would depend on their votes. It was a proposal plainly advantageous to the country, and completely in harmony with the spirit of the Conference, and it was difficult to conceive on what pretence an Irish member could justify himself in resisting it. The Government indeed, who were not strong enough or magnanimous enough to take good advice from an opponent, treated it as a hostile measure because it was proposed from the front bench of Opposition, but this was a contingency Irish members were pledged to disregard. On the other hand, O'Connell, who was suffering from nervous debility and unable to attend Parliament, wrote a letter in favour of it, and when the division came, his sons, John and Daniel, voted for it. But it is easier to show men the road to Downing Street than to recall them from that happy

* Hudson, the railway king of those days.

hunting ground. His nephew, Morgan John O'Connell, his chosen travelling companion, Dillon Browne, P. J. Somers, whom he had retained in Sligo in opposition to the most passionate remonstrance, McDonnell of Mayo, John O'Brien, and a number of other Repealers, followed the ministerial whip into the hostile lobby, and rejected the measure.

There was great wrath against the deserters in Ireland. It broke out even in Conciliation Hall; but in Westminster they were out of reach of vulgar reproaches. They might plead indeed that what they did was the natural result of the policy triumphantly affirmed in Conciliation Hall, on the question of the Dungarvan election.*

Some time later, it was proposed to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into Irish Fisheries, with a view to the employment of the people. The English gentleman, who bore the official title of Chief Secretary for Ireland, disapproved of any inquiry on the subject; and Mr. Monahan, whom the Claddagh fishermen had just sent to Parliament, Mr. Dillon Browne, who represented 200 miles of a fishing coast, the members for several Irish ports and fishing stations, and a string of honourable gentlemen, who had taken part in the Dublin Conference, helped to reject the measure.

But the gentry, in the end, behaved no better than the Old Ireland members. It was easy to find pretences for abandoning an alliance which began so ill. But

* Mr. Dillon Browne excused himself, at a later period, by a plea which created consternation when it was made public. It will be noticed in the account of the General Election.

men of honour are not relieved from their engagements because mercenaries behave like mercenaries. Sharman Crawford presented a Tenant-Right Bill to the House of Commons, and a Tenant-Right organisation was founded in Ulster, and another in the South, to formulate the claims of the people. Tenant-Right was one of the eleven measures which O'Connell had promised on behalf of the Government, but the Government resisted the proposal. The gentry, for their part, did nothing to give effect to the meagre concession of the Conference to compensate future improvements. The Bill was treated as the craze of a respectable fanatic, and rejected without serious debate, and by a division of more than four to one.

One only of the proposals sanctioned at Dublin was taken up by the Government, a Bill to facilitate the improvement of waste lands. But such a measure raised dangerous questions touching the right of persons who had obtained huge tracts in Ireland by confiscation, on conditions which were never fulfilled, and had kept them for centuries unimproved. The great absentees frowned on the Bill; the Irish party, which might have given it a national sanction, did nothing; and Lord John Russell abandoned it in a panic, confessing the humiliating motive that it would not be well received in the House of Lords. In Ireland, the repulse suggested a more effectual measure. It was proposed that all lands which had been idle for a generation, should be subject to a forced sale, that they might be utilised for the benefit of a nation in extremity.

Mr. Mill carries our judgment with him when he declares that "Wherever in any country the proprietor, generally speaking, ceases to be an improver, Political Economy has nothing to say in defence of landed property in such a country." Huge tracts, granted to courtiers and harlots by the Stuarts, and to money-lenders and foreign soldiers by Cromwell and William III., lay (and still lie) in a state of nature, while an army of idle peasants were sweltering in workhouses.

A national Parliament would probably have sanctioned the proposal, which is not intrinsically unjust or unreasonable. But it found no support in Westminster. To tax absentees, as we have seen, was another of the Conference proposals, and O'Brien tested it by a Bill imposing a tax of 10 per cent. on their Irish estates, a penalty which might, he conceived, induce them either to reside, or to sell their property to those who would reside. He instanced cases in which enormous incomes were drawn from the country without any return. The London Companies, great English nobles, like the Dukes of Bedford, Buckingham, and Devonshire, and great nobles with Irish titles, but who rarely, or never, visited their Irish estates, like the Marquises of Thomond, Donegal, and Clanricarde, and others, running through all the grades of the peerage. He was not, he reminded the House, making a new proposal; absentees had been repeatedly taxed by the Irish Parliament; two-thirds of their incomes were at one time appropriated to preserve public order; their entire rents, at another, were estreated for the defence of the country. O'Brien had been

scrupulously faithful to the compact of the Rotunda, and was entitled to support. But the hon. gentlemen who were to constitute an Irish Party, irrespective of English interests, did not make their appearance, and he only found nineteen supporters for a proposal which thirty members of Parliament had approved in Dublin.* Even English Radicals would not sanction it, and Hume, Bright, and Poulet Scroupe, swelled the majority which protected the absentees.

But there was one of the proposals to which nobles and gentry were still faithful: they were willing to afford liberal aid to the people to quit the country, if they would only go quickly. A Colonisation scheme on a great scale was got on foot, framed by Mr. Godley, one of the founders of the Canterbury Settlement in New Zealand, and directed by a Board which comprised Whigs and Tories, and even Repealers of the stamp of Mr. Morgan John O'Connell. The peasants were to be deported to Canada by districts, each congregation carrying its local priest along with it; and they would be at liberty, they were assured, to cultivate not only their religion, but their long-repressed nationality, in this new settlement. Two millions of them, it was estimated, might be transplanted at a cost of nine millions sterling granted by Parliament, and eighteen other millions which it was proposed to raise by a public company. But the project naturally found small favour in Ireland: the people were not intruders in their native country, and the sum of twenty-seven millions sterling,

* The Division was 70 to 19.

if it were forthcoming, would enable these two millions to become prosperous at home—might go far, indeed, to revive the trade of the island, to reclaim its wastes, and re-organise the whole agricultural system. As regards the nationality so suddenly taken into favour, there was plainly a place where it might be cultivated with more advantage than in the Siberia of the British Empire. But the project encountered a more formidable difficulty than opinion in Ireland. Such an exhaustive demand on the exchequer no minister had courage to propose for such a purpose, and after a little it was quietly abandoned. Had the sum been necessary to make war upon Afghans or Arabs, Africans or Irishmen, Parliament in its bounty would have provided it; but it would be a curious spectacle to see an honourable Englishman prepared to assert that seven-and-twenty millions might be had in England for any Irish object that the wisdom of man could devise.*

* That men aiming and hoping to make Ireland a nation should consent to drain away the population on any pretence was plainly out of the question. But we did not overlook, and were not permitted to forget, that we were rejecting a minor benefit in striving for a superior one. Wallis wrote me: "Does the writer of that article in the *Nation* think, and do you think, that if emigration must be, and is being, to an enormous extent, and in spite of all discouragements, that the foundation of a distinct Irish community in America is not preferable to a vague dispersion among a score of Yankee states and British colonies? If we are never to be a nation ourselves, might we not even have the chance of being the parent of a nation? Even an American Ireland would be better than none. Phocis was weak and early ruined, but Marseilles, which she founded, has done her honour and taken pride in her for more than two thousand years." At a meeting of the Confederation McGee delivered what may be regarded as an answer to Wallis's philosophical speculations: "These colonisation theorists want us to give up our country. Let us give them this answer: —If you can find a land equal to our own—so fertile in soil, so rich in water power, so temperate in its climate, so well situated for commerce—we will give up Ireland, but only when you find us such a land. We will then gather together the relics of our race; we will bear with us the shrines

The shameful failure of the Irish Party induced the Confederation to recall O'Brien, and the members who acted with him, from a useless contest. If parliamentary parties would not help the people, they could help themselves, and we resolved to tell them so plainly. The food grown on a farm ought to feed the husbandmen who reared it, before the state or the landlords could claim anything. If the people acted on this principle, to seize half a million of haggards, guarded by the whole community, as men guard their lives, might prove an impossible task. The resistance to tithe had been nearly universal, yet it was conducted with less loss of life in the whole island than befel a single parish in the famine. The classes who had grown accustomed to see the people starve, would scarcely endure to see them massacred, defending their daily bread. Even officials of a humane turn were said to be disgusted by their unnatural* patience.

Mitchel, who was chairman of a Confederate meeting, towards the close of April, stated the case at issue with great simplicity :—

"If Ireland yield produce enough to feed eight millions,

of our saints; we will throw down the monuments of our fathers; we will level Tara into the valley; we will declare Clontarf a fiction; we will efface the very foundations of Dungannon; we will rifle the Rotunda, and fling down the old seat of our fathers' parliament; we will set the capital on fire, and sail by the light of its conflagration to the unknown island, where the murderous tyranny of England cannot reach us. But if they cannot find us such a land; if there is no such land—and there is not—let us then stay where we are."

* "I have good reason to know that a man in high office in Ireland, declared that he wished to God the people stopped the exportation of food to enable the Government to take strong measures for their protection. But if their leaders and their priests encouraged them to starve, no one else could keep them."—Private letter *penes me.*

what particular eight millions in the world have the first claim upon it? Now, it is fit that it should be known there are in Ireland some men at least who would solve that question in favour of the eight Irish millions, and who, if those same millions happen to be of that opinion too, will help them to make it good."

In moving the first resolution I developed this thesis in the plainest language I could employ:—

"England at this hour is teeming with wealth and plenty, yet it is not alleged that she possesses any natural advantages which we do not share. England does not starve. Her people do not die in myriads, or fly with averted eyes from her shore. They prosper at home, and glory in the home which shelters and protects them. Has our land no natural rights? Is there some ordinance of God by which we, living in the same latitudes and under the same skies, must see our people die of hunger and nakedness? Let us not blaspheme Providence; let us not even blame England; the fault is not England's, but our own. It is the right of this Irish people, and their sacred duty, to protect themselves against all aggressors on the face of the earth, come they east or west, over the broad Atlantic, or across the British Channel. And surely the time has come, while we still suffer under one calamity, and await another, to determine the cause of our misery, and to take sure measures for our protection. The time has fully arrived when the country should come together, by some adequate representatives, and say, in the solemn voice of a nation, "We can endure no more—we can look on this desolation no longer; the resources of Ireland belong to the the people of Ireland, and henceforth must meet their necessities; and this we will maintain though earth and hell say No!"*

* Dillon, who was not present on this occasion, insisted a little earlier with perfect truth that the Confederates were not inspired by hatred of any class, and only desired that natural justice might be accomplished. "Speaking for that party, I will say that they do not seek to subvert the law but rather to establish it in the affections of the people; that they do

A General Election was at hand, and it seemed feasible, with the aid of the people themselves, to constitute such a Parliamentary party as would render the murderous policy of the Government impossible. The Irish members, good or bad, were treated by the Executive, and regarded by the world, as the legitimate spokesmen of the country; the House of Commons was a platform to which all Europe was an audience, and out of Parliament representatives have an authority which could not be successfully assumed by private persons. To confer this authority upon men who would use it fearlessly in our great extremity was nearly our last resource. It was determined to make the attempt. The design had the cordial assent of the entire party. Those who afterwards came to regard all Parliamentary action as worthless were among its active supporters.*

The difficulty of giving effect to this design was enormous; for the Confederation did not lead the limited class who possessed the franchise. The young and hopeful were at its command, not the staid and cautious, still less the selfish and timorous. It had

not aim at the confiscation of property, but are in pursuit of what they believe to be the only means of averting that confiscation; that, in fine, their efforts and their hostility are not directed against the aristocracy of Ireland, but against the system which has made them what they are."—"Confederate Meeting," *Nation*, March 6th.

* "By returning staunch Repealers for half the constituencies, and stoutly contesting the rest in the face of government influence," Mitchel wrote, "we can, if we will, demonstrate that Ireland looks no longer to boons or ameliorations from beyond the sea—that Ireland wants neither grants nor loans, neither boards of works nor soup commissioners, for the future, but is, once for all, resolved to consume her own produce—to live upon her own means, to have and to keep Ireland for the Irish."—*Nation*, March 6, 1847.

grown with prodigious rapidity, but its roots were not so vigorous and widespread as its branches. Wherever the organisation extended, there was the same story: it had to fight for existence not with anti-Repealers, but with the partisans of Conciliation Hall. Whenever we meditated starting a candidate, it was their hostility that had to be estimated. If the Secession had taught O'Connell the unexpected strength of independent opinion, we had now to learn the immoveable force of habit, and the permanent authority of a great name, even when it is in eclipse.*

But sober men were growing impatient of cabals at such a conjuncture, and the cry of reconciliation was again raised in many places. Lord Cloncurry made himself spokesman of this sentiment by addressing a public letter to O'Brien, recommending, as a manifest duty, an immediate reunion of Repealers. Dillon had

* From Cork, where there only remained a Conciliation Hall mob, the educated class having deserted it *en masse*, this remnant was troublesome. "On Monday night," Meagher wrote me, from that city, "we stood our ground well; carried all the resolutions triumphantly, and beat 'the devil and all his works and pomps.'" At Belfast, as we shall presently see, the same class were more troublesome than at Cork. At elections it was still the Conciliation Hall Repealers who were to be dreaded. About this time, Mitchel and Meagher, having sought for me at my house in vain, the former wrote:—"We wanted to consult you about this. The election committee meeting in Wicklow Street (Dublin), having already 200 names on their requisition, purpose to fill the blank in with the name of Meagher. He has told them that he will take some days to consider it before he gives an answer, and as it is a very serious question for us all, I wish you would come in to-morrow (Monday) and help our deliberations. On Monday evening the Election Committee are to meet again. O'Gorman and I think of going to it, and we should have something determined before then. They expect to get a good many Protestants to join in this requisition, and if that be done to any great extent—if a requisition be signed say by 400 electors, 100 of them Protestants—it is pretty plain what the answer ought to be. Of course, it would need caution. Think of it and meet us to-morrow." The constituency was Dublin, where there could be no doubt of the result if Repealers were united.

the same idea in his mind. He wrote to me just then from Mayo :—

"I have been agitating since I came here the prospect we were talking of in the garden the last day I saw you. O'Flaherty, the new member for Galway, is resolved to do everything in his power to effect a reunion (not between us and the Conciliation Hall jobbers), but between the honest Repealers throughout the country. In principle, he is actively with us, and he would insist on all our conditions, save one—viz., the dissolution of the Repeal Association. I am now decidedly of opinion that if the matter should be taken up by him and half a dozen men of his kind, and, if they should be opposed to this dissolution, we ought to give way on this point. I will not state my reasons here, as I expect to see you soon." . . . .

The sentiment at length penetrated Conciliation Hall. Father McHugh, a clergyman who had steadily adhered to the Association, declared that such a measure could be no longer postponed. His suggestion was warmly received, and he proceeded to move that a conference of the leading members of the two organisations should be held for the purpose. Mr. John O'Connell professed himself willing to make the experiment, and negotiations were opened with the Seceders.

Among the Confederates Dillon strongly favoured the proposal; it was a waste of life, he said, to go on as we had been doing. The people, in the madness of their misery, and in a blindness as calamitous and tragical as the misery itself, were more disposed to stone us than to listen to us. I took the same view. But we found unexpected difficulties. O'Brien feared that

Mr. John O'Connell only intended to make a feint, not a truce; and feared, on the other hand, that if the union were accomplished, we might lead our friends into a trap, as the Association was overwhelmed with debt. The leaders of the Dublin artisans, for their part, insisted that the conditions of their Remonstrance, which in fact were not immoderate or unreasonable, should be complied with. Individual Confederates made special difficulties. Pigot wrote to O'Brien that if a reunion took place, he, for his part, would never consent to sit on the same committee with Joseph Henry Dunne, Tom Arkins, Pat Costello, or poor old Tom Steele. "As to physical force (he adds) I think it would be mere abject stupidity to endure even the name of it. J. O'C. must give up that stuff without a word."* And he warned him that by going back to Conciliation Hall we should lose the Conservative Repealers, who not only distrusted but detested John O'Connell. This fear was certainly well-founded. I received passionate appeals from Protestant Nationalists not to return to the house of bondage; a little time, some of them asserted, would see a substantial movement of Protestant Repealers, if they were not disheartened and disgusted by finding bigotry and corruption condoned. "A reunion with Conciliation Hall would be destruction," one of this party wrote to me, "for Conciliation Hall is now merely a cudgel in the hands of the priests." A gifted woman, who had never sat in the same room with a Catholic ecclesiastic, but

* "Cahirmoyle Correspondence."

whose heart beat with passionate love of Ireland and pity for the suffering people, could not be persuaded that any other will but theirs would prevail among the Celtic race. "If I had been a Roman Catholic," she wrote, "I would have been a Conciliation Hall Repealer. I would have paid, shouted, and deserted at O'Connell's bidding; I would have loathed all rebels against his authority; I would have transferred my allegiance to his nominee; perhaps, heaven knows, I would have embroidered a banner for his mean ragamuffins to wave over the corpse of Ireland. No, no, don't go back there." *

The reasons for hesitating were certainly strong. The Association was as bankrupt in character as in funds, its leaders were still trafficking in Government patronage; and the Protestant prejudice was not unfounded.

But the motives for reconciliation far outweighed these objections. The solid union of the country could be had on no other terms. By reconciliation alone was it possible to gain the bulk of the Catholic clergy, and without the Catholic clergy I was persuaded that the people would do nothing. With them what might they not attempt and achieve? Pius IX. had set an example

* A beneficed clergyman of the diocese of Kildare wrote to me privately to exhort us neither to ally ourselves with Old Ireland or the landlords. The Protestant people could trust us, but they would never trust the section which followed Mr. John O'Connell. As for the landlords, they would, if they were permitted, do by the Repealers as they had done by the Protestant parties which supported them, use them and betray them. In a little while the Protestant people would move; they only awaited leaders whom they could trust to represent them faithfully and adequately.

of generous patriotism which would influence ecclesiastics profoundly; he opened the prison door to political suspects, called together an Assembly of Notables to inform himself of the wishes of the country, and to the remonstrance of Austria, that he was setting a dangerous example, replied that he feared God, and feared nothing else. When the Catholic Church in Ireland not only feared God, but feared nothing else, the day of deliverance would not be far off. And a reconciliation while O'Connell lived promised advantages which might be lost by delay, for it was not difficult to foresee that his death would embitter the contest hopelessly.*

But above all it was the one practical remedy for the weakness which left the people a prey to famine. If the design were worked out successfully we might hope to see a great League spring up, consisting not alone of the reunited Repealers, but of powerful recruits from the gentry and professional classes, whom the late terrible season had converted to nationality. Repeal, backed by the famine, might become more powerful than in '43; monster meetings would revive with a new and desperate intensity; a central authority in Dublin,

* An anonymous friend wrote to O'Brien before the Secession a warning which had still more significance now:—"Keep your present position for the sake of your country. If you lose it during O'Connell's lifetime it will be impossible to recover it after his death. . . . The people whom he so served during his lifetime would forget his faults when he was in his grave, and be slow to transfer to an opponent . . . a confidence to which he was justly entitled while he lived. If his occupation were gone, as soon it must be, I know no other man capable of taking his place. You have no knowledge of the writer, but he knows you . . . and respects you for your rank and lineage, and particularly on account of your having taken a step downwards to assist your poor countrymen upwards."—A Munster Celt to O'Brien, "Cahirmoyle Correspondence."

powerful as an elected executive, would direct the country; and a serried organisation, rivalling that of '82, would put the national cause in a position not to be permanently resisted.

With some difficulty the Confederate Council was induced to appoint delegates to meet the delegates of the Association, and a conference took place.* To avoid the sore question of debt, and the sorer question of disreputable committee-men, it was proposed that the Association and Confederation should both be dissolved and immediately reunited in a new body, whose rules—to content the Old Irelanders—should be submitted to a competent lawyer, and which should be independent of English parties, to satisfy the other section. The new committee, it was suggested, might consist of sixty members, of whom the existing bodies should each elect thirty. Some other questions were raised, which will be sufficiently understood from the result. Mr. John O'Connell would not consent to dissolve the Repeal Association. He was reminded that his father had dissolved in succession the Catholic Association, the Anti-Tithe Association, the Anti-Tory Association, the Precursor Society, and the Irish Volunteers, when he found them no longer useful. After the State Trials of

* It was held on Tuesday, the 4th of May, '47. The Confederation chose as their delegates William Smith O'Brien, Charles Gavan Duffy, John Mitchel, John B. Dillon, Thomas F. Meagher, Richard O'Gorman, jun., T. D. McGee, and Michael Doheny. The delegates of the Repeal Association were John O'Connell, A. R. Stritch, Edward Clements, Thomas Steele, John Ferguson, Patrick Costello, T. M. Ray, and Rev. M. Wynne. Father McHugh was also present at the request of the Association. An official report of the proceedings will be found in the *Nation* of May 8th, '47.

'43 he had proposed to dissolve the Repeal Association itself; and if in '43 why not in '47? But he was immoveable. He had determined apparently that no union should take place, and he succeeded. But he could no longer escape criticism. Fr. McHugh, at the next meeting in Conciliation Hall, charged him with creating the difficulties which kept the people asunder, and defending them by reasons which were worthless:—

"You talk (he said) about not dissolving—why, you are dissolved already, for you are defunct. ('No, no.') Saying 'No' costs nothing, I say 'Yes.' If you are not defunct, let me ask what political power do you possess in Ireland? None whatever. Many a highly respectable gentleman has disappeared from this Hall. I don't see them here; where are they? They will not be connected with you because you are doing no good, and are unable to effect any. . . . There was another point on which some difference arose. I mean the publication of accounts, which was asked for by Mr. O'Brien. I quite agree with him on that subject. Why should not the accounts of this Association be published? What has become of all the money that was received by this body? I question no man's honesty or integrity; but I say that every public body receiving public subscriptions should account to the public for that money. And, further, Mr. O'Brien said that no paid officer of the Association should be a member of the committee. I quite agree with him in that also. It is very objectionable that any paid officer should have the power of voting in committee, because, no matter how honourable he might be, the fact of his being a salaried officer would lay him open to suspicion. Mr. John O'Connell proposed that the proprietors of newspapers should not be members of the Association. Mr. O'Brien and the gentlemen who acted with him objected to such a proposition. I must say, to the honour and credit of Charles Gavan Duffy, he came forward and avowed his willingness to withdraw himself from the Association, if, by so doing, he

could facilitate a cordial co-operation among all classes of Irishmen." *

On another point, where the evidence of a priest was peculiarly valuable, he spoke with commendable plainness:—

"How can you expect Protestant gentlemen of high character, of strong Protestant feeling, who, at the same time, are deeply imbued with the principles of nationality, to work with you if the practice of dragging religious subjects into your debates be not discontinued?"

His peroration struck awe into the hearts of his audience because it was the naked truth, and a truth of awful significance:—

"I am convinced that not one soul would have perished of starvation in Ireland had not this unfortunate dissension broken out amongst us. Who has caused it is not for me to say; but this I declare, that the result has been most disastrous to Ireland."

One concession Mr. John O'Connell was prepared to make. With respect to the Peace Resolutions he was willing they should be amended so as to apply only to the British Empire. Other countries were graciously permitted to retain their natural rights, if only Ireland renounced them for ever. More he could not concede in his father's absence; and the time was not very

* It was proposed to insert in the terms of reunion a condition that the *Nation* should be restored to its original position, but I requested that this might not be done. And this may be the most convenient place to state that in the Irish Confederation, or any political organisation which followed, during my connection with Irish affairs, I did not permit the *Nation* to profit a penny by its existence.

distant when his father would return to Ireland to act for himself:—

"Within the last ten days," he said, "a marked change has set in, and though not so rapidly as to predict a speedy return to this Hall, yet we trust, under the Providence of God, that many months will not elapse—even if the improvement be only at the present rate—when he will return to Ireland."

The attempt had come to nothing, and the country was assured, in the few journals which adhered to the Association, that O'Brien had done all the mischief, and done it from the basest motives.* But these arts no longer prospered. Conciliation Hall had ceased to deliver oracles, for above all things a reverent and submissive audience is indispensable to the oracle-monger. The attendance at the public meetings dwindled to a handful, the rent fell to a nominal sum, and the leader stood alone. Like James II. he could neither placate opponents nor retain adherents. His father began with a dozen followers and increased them to millions; he began with millions and reduced them to a score or a dozen. To govern the well-disciplined staff of the agitation proved to be a task beyond his strength; and

* "Do you know what the people of Dublin think of Smith O'Brien? Why, nothing less than that he is in the pay of the Government! that he is doing the work of England for a 'consideration,' and that he is using the young and old ones of the Seceders as his tools in the honest work. This is the feeling of almost every man I have spoken to in Dublin about the leader of Secession. Some of the shallow Old Irelanders say he was influenced in his opposition to the Liberator through vanity, but the shrewd ones say it is for a Government 'consideration.'"—*Waterford Chronicle.* It was probably criticism like this which compelled the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Ryan, to declare, a little later, that "no words could adequately express his conviction of the unimpeachable integrity of Mr. Wm. Smith O'Brien's honour and unblemished character."

people to whom it was still a subject of interest heard with amazement that at length the Head Pacificator and the chief Inspector of Repeal Reading Rooms had abandoned Conciliation Hall.*

The Irish Party had failed, the attempt to reconstruct the National Party had failed, and the cry of the suffering people was still heard like the wail of a martyr at the stake. It was impossible to accept any defeat as final in such a case. We determined to appeal to the middle class—especially the middle class Protestants of Dublin—to come to the rescue of the country. One of the ablest and most humane among them † had, at an early period, said:—

"Let us meet a tremendous danger like men and brothers, willing to encounter all risks for the preservation of our own branch of the human family."

And this is what we hoped they would do. The leading Confederates made lists of their friends and acquaintances among this class, and personally canvassed them to undertake the task. The idea of a council of safety was already seething in many minds, and the proposal was well received. O'Brien secured a few country gentlemen, and Butt, Le Fanu, Ferguson, Dr. Maunsell, and Henry Fitzgibbon promised their assistance. Sir Colman O'Loghlen was eager to find a field where he could be useful without violating his convic-

* Captain Broderick finally suffered from mental alienation, under which he died prematurely; and poor Steele (we may hope) fell under the same influence, for some months later he flung himself into the Thames, and though at the moment he was rescued, died of the effects in a few days.

† Mr. (now Sir) Samuel Ferguson.

tions, and he threw all his energy into the project. We were impatient to begin at once, for the need was frightfully urgent, but it was not safe or possible to hurry such a project.* In April, Pigot wrote :—

"I hope you will be patient. In my mind it ought to be looked to as a matter for realisation sometime about Christmas. There must be much discussion—many conferences with Butt, Ferguson, and their friends; much correspondence through and by them; many gradual accessions, for we must not soil such great names and ideas, but must have a really National Council, or none at all. All this *must*, if rightly done, take a long time: certainly several months."

In the midst of these intense pre-occupations, the news was suddenly announced that O'Connell was dead. It was a complete surprise to Ireland. Barely a fortnight earlier his return to public life had been formally promised, and during his absence to suggest that he was in serious danger was treated as an offence. He was constantly improving, it was asserted, and almost ready

* "Lest Mitchel forget to write to you, as I know he intended, I mean now to tell you what has been done in the matter of the National Council since you left town. I saw Ferguson (next day) and he entered warmly into the project, and promised his co-operation. He has since been engaging others in the scheme. Mitchel and Meagher saw Le Fanu and Butt, and both are ready to help it. They also saw John O'Connell, and he gave a promise of co-operation, on which, however, they do not seem disposed much to rely. We called on O'Loghlen yesterday. He had just received a letter from you, and I presume has communicated his views to you. Two or three other Protestant gentlemen of less note, but of substantial usefulness, have promised help. The *Evening Packet* has had an article calling on Robert Holmes and Mr. Monsell to originate some such movement. The *Evening Herald* also, a new Conservative paper, addressed to the clergy of the Established Church, gave its direct sympathy to the project as broached in the *Nation*. . . . We do not like to write any more about it in the *Nation* lest it should get a party character."—Duffy to O'Brien, "Cahirmoyle Correspondence."

to resume his place in the national counsels.* For nearly two months he had travelled slowly through France, accompanied by his youngest son and the Rev. Dr. Miley, and attended by Duggan, a favourite valet long in his service. Early in May they reached the Italian Riviera. They paused at Genoa, the city of palaces, and there on Saturday, May 15th, at half-past nine in the night, he died without pain. The bells of the Anunciata tolled while the great Catholic chief was in his agony, and mass was solemnised at its five-and-twenty altars for the eternal repose of his soul. His latest directions were that his heart should be sent to Rome, where it is piously preserved in the church of the Irish College, and his body to Ireland, where it rests under an edifice copied from the most ancient and characteristic ecclesiastical architecture of the island. In Rome and in Paris his death was commemorated with the same distinction as if an illustrious native of

* The announcements on the subject were uniform. Before he left London a Cork newspaper reported that he was fatally stricken; the Head Pacificator in Conciliation Hall (February 22nd) contradicted this statement: "Now I tell you, men of Ireland, that O'Connell is not dead, nor even dangerously ill in London . . so far is he from being in danger I can tell you, on the very highest medical authority, that there is no disease of the heart, or any organic disease of any kind whatever." On the same occasion a letter was read from Mr. John O'Connell: "He is strictly directed by his medical attendants to abstain for the present as much as possible from his public avocations; and they assure us that a few months' observance of this restriction will, with the blessing of God, restore and preserve him to us and to poor Ireland." A month later (March 15th) Mr. John O'Connell was still more confident that there was nothing serious to fear: "His medical attendants counsel his immediate departure for the south of Europe, and cheer us with the hope of his return in renewed health before the autumn." At the beginning of the month in which he died Dr. Miley wrote: "The medical treatment of the eminent physicians of Lyons promises to be very successful, and with it we look for a great and progressive improvement."

the country had died, and Ireland prepared to pay the last honour to the remains of her great Tribune. The *post-mortem* examination disclosed the unexpected fact that he had been two or three years labouring under a fatal disease, which impaired his mind more than his body, and that his recovery had been long impossible.*

The death of their aged leader, alone in a foreign country, touched deeply the feelings of the Irish people. A popularity almost without parallel for intensity and duration had been followed by a sudden reverse; but it was not against the man, but against the incredible policy of his old age the people had rebelled, and there was a revival of affection in which his mistakes and shortcomings were cheerfully put out of sight. Had he left one man of heart and brains to represent him, such a one might have gathered the whole people anew under one banner, provided it was the authentic banner of nationality. The Confederates took the lead in respect for the dead; they resolved to wear a badge of mourning for a month, and to attend his funeral in a body. The writers of the *Nation* treated his memory with generous respect, without recanting the censure which his alliance with the Whigs had wrung from them. The estimate they made of the dead Tribune approximates closely, I believe, to the ultimate verdict of his race on his career. His powers and services were recognised as immense; his weaknesses were acknow-

* The report of Dr. Lacour, who made the *post-mortem* examination, is cited in "Young Ireland," p. 531. Dr. Duff, the last physician who attended him (at Genoa), declared that "a constant tendency to cerebral congestion rendered his death certain at no very distant period."

ledged to be in a large degree the outcome of his position at the outset of his career, and of the dangerous influence of unrestrained power at its close. Born in the same year as American liberty, and reared in an era of revolutions, the age was not indeed the father of the man, but assuredly it was his schoolmaster. He heard in his boyhood the drums of the Volunteers, and while he was still a student in French Flanders, the heir of Charlemagne and Louis le Grand was guillotined within sight of the palace of his race. When he returned to his native country, John Keogh and Wolfe Tone were drawing into one focus the friends of religious and civil liberty, and the young man became a United Irishman. But he was not a revolutionist; when they conspired to win independence with the aid of France, he retired from the Society, and, in the end, entered a loyal corps, founded by the lawyers to support the British connection. It was after the Union his public career properly began. The country was reduced to impotence and despair by an unsuccessful rebellion, the people were full of suspicion from recent treachery, and angry and unjust from hopeless suffering under a partisan magistracy and a ferocious yeomanry, and the very name of resistance was a terror to them. There was a Catholic agitation, indeed; but its leaders had become associated with the United Irishmen, and shared their discomfiture. At a time when secret conspiracy was hopeless, it was a memorable effort of genius to take up anew and perfect a system of peaceful agitation which might be accepted by such a people, and to work

it out through painful delay and discouragement inch by inch with imperturbable patience.* Before his time the middle-class Catholics did, and were, everything; he created popular opinion in Ireland by bringing the actual people as a factor into Catholic affairs. But this stroke of statesmanship stands nearly alone; he had not either in the movement for religious liberty, or in the national movement which followed, a settled plan worked out on prescribed lines, like those to which the greatest contemporary statesmen have accustomed us. The first Repeal agitation was abandoned after the universal people had been pledged to it; the Anti-Tithe agitation was abandoned after passive resistance had rendered the collection of tithe impossible; and the second Repeal agitation was deliberately permitted to fall into ruin.

It is easy to see now that his power and usefulness would have been immeasurably greater had he refrained from promising, at the outset of his experiments, more than he meant to perform. But he could not escape the penalties of his position. The spokesman of slaves striving for freedom, he believed it necessary to overstate his case in order to fasten attention upon it; and, like the tragedy queen, he protested too much.

* We must not suppose, as one is apt to do estimating the career of a great man by its results, that he rose at once, or speedily, to undisputed authority. He rose slowly, and through a cloud of impediments. After he had been years at work, we find him deprecating the idea that he pretended to any authority. "It was not for him to lead public opinion anywhere. He protested against an opinion going forth that Catholic affairs had fallen so low as to render it necessary to make him the director of them."—Life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell, M.P., edited by his son.

Whatever he did was shamefully misrepresented by a partisan press; and this is a discipline which tends to impair strict accuracy and delicate rectitude, unless in the exceptional men who are not disturbed by slander. He is entitled to large allowance; but from whatever moral or intellectual deficiency the habit sprang, he was undoubtedly careless of strict truth when his purpose was to excite rash confidence, or to strike a hard blow. And this fault had an evil influence on the people, who loved and imitated him. He taught them to expect at a fixed time what was at best remote and difficult, and a people accustomed to this alcohol grew impatient of the insipidity of the running stream.

He was gifted with a noble daring, when daring was rare and precious among a people still struggling for the fundamental rights of civilised men, and a stability of purpose not commonly allied with a mobile sensibility and vehement passions. He was laborious and patient, energetic and full of resources; and his life was a model of persistent industry. If he had set his nation an example of sober truth in word and action—an example so needful among a people escaping from the degrading shifts and subterfuges of a long dependence—and an example of unselfishness like that by which George Washington has exalted and ennobled a national contest, he would have died as he had lived—the undisputed leader of his race; and his memory would have been an inspiration to every succeeding generation.

His distrust was easily awakened, and this was a deficiency which left evil results. He rarely fostered

independent thought, and his death bequeathed a great memory to his country, but not a great party. The eldest son of undisputed authority, says the proverb, is a slave, but the second is a rebel; and the generation which outlived him completely escaped from the control of his later teaching. When he was dead more than a quarter of a century the centenary of his birth was celebrated with a memorable exhibition of popular power in the capital of his native country; but in the vast array who honoured his memory there was probably not one man under sixty who believed in the Peace Resolutions. Many of them, I make no doubt, rejected insurrection from the agencies which Ireland could legitimately employ; but it was on grounds widely different from the "immutable and universal principle" which broke up the Repeal Association. And the men who called that great assembly together, who projected the national movement out of which it sprung, were the remnant of the party over whom he obtained a temporary victory.*

Throughout his career he had been the subject of extravagant reproach and extravagant panegyric. The

* He was careless and immethodic in business affairs, and a liberal income did not protect him from domestic confusion and worry. There is a characteristic saying attributed to his brother James—a hard, shrewd, prosperous man, who kept clear of politics. He was asked at what period O'Connell's money troubles commenced. "Well," he replied, "Dan was a couple of years older than me, and I don't remember him till he was fourteen; but he was in trouble then, and never got out of it since." Another saying attributed to this caustic old man, in later times, tickled his contemporaries, who knew the *dramatis personæ*. Some one asked him why a statesman, so able and clear-sighted as his brother, had appointed a semi-lunatic to be his Head Pacificator. "Why, indeed!" replied Sir James; "Pray, who the d——l else would take such an office?"

truth would leave him the reputation of a leader not so free from self-seeking as Grattan and Washington, not so steadfast in purpose and indomitable in will as Francis Deak; but one who through a long life had constantly devoted great powers to a just cause. An eminent soldier, who had no personal relations with him, has vindicated his position as the tribune of the Irish people on grounds which are sound and just. Sir William Napier, writing to a daughter of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had intelligible reasons for distrusting O'Connell, says:—

"You are quite right that O'Connell is not a great man, but I do not agree with you that he gets his money wrongfully or meanly. He has undertaken a great and excellent work—the freeing of his country from the most diabolical and horribly mean tyranny that ever was endured; and as he is unable to do it by arms, he must do it by art. Hence, many things he must submit to, many mean acts he must commit, because he has to deal with the meanest and basest of men. You judge him hardly. He does not do the thing in the noblest way, but he does it. If he did not take money, he would be driven from the field long ago. If he fought, he would have been killed long ago. He is a general, to be guarded and paid for the sake of his army and his cause."*

A just measure of his capacity is the immense influence he produced in Europe. Balzac, in his visions of successful ambition, declared that his aim was to add a fourth to the band of illustrious men the century had

* *Life of Sir William Napier.* In the same book one finds evidence that Tom Moore was disposed to judge him less generously and less wisely, I think. Writing to General Napier after the first Repeal agitation, he says: "O'Connell and his ragamuffins have brought a tarnish on Irish patriotism which it will never recover."

produced—Napoleon, Cuvier, and "the incarnation of a people, O'Connell." As the incarnation of a people he taught two generations—the heirs of sorrow and slavery—to assert themselves like freemen. If he failed, as one who opposed him has written, "he failed like Samson and Brutus," and he has left the completion of his work to his race as a task they are bound to accomplish.*

In Dr. Maunsel's diary one gets the contemporary Conservative view of this event—the view of an honourable opponent, tainted with hereditary prejudice:—

"London, May 22. O'Connell's death. Telegraph to the *Times*. 'The news is disbelieved here; but, though not improbable, is received without the slightest emotion. O'Connell's death will, no doubt, accelerate the ripening of national purposes in the Conservative mind. But I dare not warrant, until I see it, the length to which either their leaders will go, or the gentlemanly multitude follow them. I experienced no emotion at O'Connell's death, for I never either loved or honoured him.

* There is no danger among an enthusiastic and grateful people that his memory should be inadequately honoured; but is there no danger that the errors which we inherited from his era should be perpetuated? Looking at Ireland from a prodigious distance of space, which seemed equivalent to a great period of time, I sometimes noticed with pain, during the last quarter of a century, that an intolerance of all opposition to the favourite of the hour, an impatience of salutary controversy before grave resolutions are taken, the clamorous enforcement of pledges which, after a little time, became obsolete and were thrown aside, a fluctuating policy which rent away to-day what was "woven with care into our plan" only yesterday, and the encouragement of two inconsistent proposals at the same time—one of which designed to go east, the other west—were as common in the agitation then popular as in the days of O'Connell. A policy is as necessary to a party as a chart to a navigator; a unanimity attained by silencing dissent is sure to prove worthless in the end, and the leader of a popular party is only safe when he is as habitually subject to fair criticism as the leader of a parliament.

But those who have, and the country generally, have a right to bewail his fate and honour his memory. Surely, he did a giant's work in his day. And if he had his vices, in nothing did he more faithfully represent the country he belonged to. The luxuriance of his errors was mainly due to his solitariness as an able man. The Union had shorn the elder race—the Grattans and Currans—of their authority; while the Tones, and Emmets, and all the other men of real ability who should have completed the others' work had been ruthlessly swept away.' "

The reverence which the Confederates exhibited towards the dead leader was not reciprocated by his family; and, after a correspondence between O'Brien and Maurice O'Connell, the project of attending the funeral as a body was abandoned. What was more unexpected, it provoked sharp dissent from their own ranks. Fr. Kenyon wrote a letter to the *Nation* fiercely refusing to be a party to it. He denied that O'Connell's death was any loss whatever, or that a tribute of respect was due to him. He accounted his removal rather a gain than a loss; and the proposal of a national tribute of respect exhibited, he conceived, an insensibility to the merits of right and wrong, and annihilation of all true, holy, and just instincts. If you respect a man, he must be respectable in his totality; but the dead man had befooled his country before his death, and died politically impenitent.

Suppressing dissent was one of the worst errors of the Repeal Association, and as the public action of the Confederation was called in question by a member, I could not refuse Father Kenyon a hearing;

but I combated the ruthless doctrine which refused to recognise the great good a man had done because he had also done some wrong, and justified the action of O'Brien and the Council. Father Kenyon desired to follow up the subject with a second letter in the same vein, but his objection had had a fair hearing, and further controversy, while the unburied body of O'Connell lay in a foreign city, was declined as unbecoming and untimely. He regarded, as we shall see, this proceeding as a serious offence;* not foreseeing that the end of his own career would ill endure to be tried by the stern example which he cited—that a sinner is damned for his sin, though he may have glorified God till his hair blanched.

The death of O'Connell was immediately followed by an event which he had often solicited in vain—the meeting of an Irish Council in Dublin. The project which the Confederates had silently laboured to initiate a few weeks earlier was at length accomplished. The Irish Council was designed to combine the authority of station and wealth with the vigour of popular passion;

* On the other hand, Pigot wrote to O'Brien:—"The *Nation* quite relieves my fears as to how our party would treat the memory of O'Connell; nothing has been wanting, so far, at this time. Of course, I allude to the leader (Duffy's, I presume) and not to the piece of stilted exaggeration published under the affected title of 'The Dead.'"—("Cahirmoyle Correspondence.") The article objected to was Reilly's; but I rather think the title was not his. O'Brien shortly afterwards warned me of a prejudice Father Kenyon's letter created, which, in the end, proved a formidable misfortune. "I am told," he said, "that the feeling of the mob of Limerick is very adverse to the Confederation. The cry about O'Connell's death, taken in connection with Mr. Kenyon's letter, has done us much harm there. I am sorry that we didn't expose the injustice and falsehood of that cry at the time when it was first raised." The mob of Limerick, as we shall see, justified his fears.

but though the commercial and professional classes attended in unprecedented numbers, the gentry were but scantily represented. A few landlords, of whom Mr. Monsell, Mr. Chetwode, and Mr. J. D. Wilson were the most notable, took a constant interest in it, and with Ferguson and O'Loghlen, who became secretaries, made a genuine attempt to deal with the public calamity. They thought that under the Union such a visitation of Providence ought to be treated as the common responsibility of the United Kingdom; but this was the proverbial oversight of reckoning without their host. The stronger member of the partnership had determined that, though there should not be a separate kingdom of Ireland for the purpose of self-protection, it must be peremptorily isolated in its afflictions.

The Young Irelanders worked on committees and took a modest share in the public debates. They did not insist upon any of their special opinions, except that the corn then growing should be kept in the country. Mitchel, as chairman of a sub-committee, issued a circular to Poor-law Boards, requesting them to cause an estimate to be made of the food supplies in their respective Unions, as the bases of a decisive measure at a later period. McGee made a speech of wonderful power and skill on the common interest all classes had in saving the people. A country gentleman afterwards described to O'Brien his displeasure at seeing "an ill-dressed ill-looking boy" presenting himself to such an assembly, and his amazement when this boy overcame

the first prejudice and won close attention and cordial assent throughout a long speech.*

The Conservative element was strong in the Council, and to alarm it by naked nationality would have been as unfair and mischievous as the sectarianism of Conciliation Hall. But there was naturally much private conversation on the subject, and the men of best character and station among this party admitted that they had contemplated becoming Federalists, and would willingly be something more if they could be effectually protected against "democracy and the priests." But what we wanted was not barren professions of nationality, but an assent to measures which would save the people in the current year, and this was not to be had. A sub-committee of the most liberal members to whom the question of Tenant Right was referred did not

* This was the contemporary testimony as to the demeanour of the Young Irelanders, as one may still see in the correspondence of the period:—"O'Loghlen and Ferguson assured me that our friends had won golden opinions in the Council, by their courtesy and forbearance, so that I think there was no just ground for Murray's apprehensions. I am sure McGee's speech did us great good. And it is out of the question that men who may lose the sympathy of the people, by appearing to countenance opinions spoken in the Council should sit by, dumb dogs. However, the same moderation that has been exhibited ought to be continued."—*Duffy to O'Brien* ("Cahirmoyle Correspondence.") "I was gratified to find that the Council of National Protection, or whatever it is to be called, has commenced so quietly; and considerably relieved likewise by the moderate tone of your leader; for from the way you wrote to Pigot and me, I had apprehended too noisy a welcome of the Conservative demonstration, which I think now and hereafter would be the worst policy on the part of the *Nation*. Let the Conservatives approach Repeal as much as possible; but beware of scaring the timid or wavering among them by any untimely trumpeting of the ultimate consequences of their accession. The publication of the proceedings of the Council is a wise move. We shall see now what Butt and Le Fanu, and the other minds of the young Conservative party, have to say for themselves. Where is Gray Porter? This surely would be above all others the opportunity for him. And, bating his crotchets, the man has merit."—*Wallis to Duffy*.

venture to go further than to recommend compensation for improvements which had been officially registered, and by way of tenure a twenty-one years' lease, at such a rent as a solvent tenant would pay; while a right was reserved to the landlord to extinguish all claims for compensation at pleasure by paying the tenant a sum equivalent to the present value of the improvements. On the cardinal question of keeping the harvest in the country, a sub-committee was appointed to report on the food resources of next year, and as a General Election was at hand the Council adjourned till autumn.

NOTE ON CHAPTER II.

The Council of the Confederation consisted of the following gentlemen:—

William Smith O'Brien, M.P.; John Shea Lalor, J.P., Gurteenroe; John B. Dillon, barrister; Francis Comyn, J.P., Woodstock; Robert Orr, Bray Lodge; John Mitchel; Luke Shea, J.P., The Rennies, County Cork; Robert Cane, M.D., J.P., Kilkenny; Charles Gavan Duffy, barrister; James Haughton, merchant; Richard O'Gorman, sen., merchant; Denny Lane, barrister, Cork; Edward F. Murray, C.E., London; Thomas F. Meagher, Waterford; John Martin, Loughorne; M. J. Barry, barrister; George Smith, Liverpool; P. Brady, T.C., Cork; Richard O'Gorman, jun., barrister; James Cantwell; Joseph Duffy, M.D., Finglas; T. B. MacManus, Liverpool; Michael Crean; Michael R. O'Farrell, barrister; Martin MacDermott, architect; C. H. West, M.D.; James Keely; Isaac S. Varian, Cork; D. F. M'Carthy, barrister; P. J. Smyth, Kilmainham; Charles Taaffe, barrister; T. Devin Reilly; T. D. M'Gee; Patrick O'Donohue; J. Gilligan, late Inspector of Dublin Repeal Wardens; and Nicholas Harding.

The original policy of the Confederation has been often misstated by writers imperfectly acquainted with the facts, as aiming from the beginning at physical force. At the first meeting of the Council (Jan. 19th, 1847), a sub-committee was appointed to draw up a petition to Parliament for a Repeal of the Union, of which Mr. Mitchel and Mr. Reilly were members. A standing Parliamentary Committee was appointed on the motion of Mitchel, and the rules were submitted to Mr. Henn, Q.C., to obtain his opinion on their legality, on a motion proposed by Dillon, and seconded by Mitchel.—*Minute Book of the Irish Confederation.*

CHAPTER III.

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1847.

As O'Connell died in the middle of May, it was expected that his funeral would take place early in June. But June passed, and after June July, without the body being brought to Ireland. When it reached Birkenhead, within a few hours' sail of Dublin, it was detained four days before embarkation. What was the purpose of this inordinate delay? A General Election was about to take place in August, and the angry spirit of the time affirmed, without scruple, that the funeral ceremony was reserved to swell the reaction which had followed O'Connell's death, and to utilise it in favour of his son. For Mr. John O'Connell had been formally installed as his father's successor at Conciliation Hall. Various bishops and archbishops sent him their congratulations and a little money, and exhorted him, by the memory of the dead Tribune, to perform impossibilities. One needs to recall a great nation encouraging Richard Cromwell to ascend Oliver's chair of state, or a great army turning their eyes hopefully to the feeble boy who inherited the name of Napoleon, to forgive this fatal error at such a moment. The one purpose Mr. John O'Connell could accomplish was to distract a nation in its hour of greatest need. The creative energy of a

born leader, who strides to the front in an hour of peril, is a memory to stir the heart and imagination of a distant posterity; but an incapable pretender, who knew he could accomplish nothing, but was bent on thwarting those who might, suggests reflections of another character.

The success of a leader must, sooner or later, depend on his capacity to lead. If the son of a lawyer assumes his father's gown, he does not necessarily inherit his clientele, nor does the son of a politician.* But the reaction of gratitude and affection for O'Connell which had set in made it possible at the moment to seem to lead. It was sailing with wind and tide. The Association called on the country to rally round it anew, and to support Conciliation Hall Repealers, and no others, at the coming election.

The funeral procession took place in Dublin on the 5th of August, and though the state of the country naturally diminished the attendance, and lessened the enthusiasm, it was a great and solemn spectacle. He was buried in Glasnevin, where Curran preceded him, and where many distinguished Irishmen have since been laid.†

* A scornful critic at the time summed up the facts in a sentence:—"The king of the forest is dead, and there is neither lion nor lion's cub to fill his vacant place. A serviceable pack-horse, indeed, is ready to ascend the throne; but as his roar will not arrest the hunter in mid-chase, or his paw strike down the rival tiger, that arrangement will manifestly not answer."

† Dr. Maunsell's note on the ceremony in his Diary estimates it differently, but, I think, less justly:—

"*August 5th.*—O'Connell's funeral. The exhibition was a very poor one: poor especially in the article of grief, which no one, great or small, seemed to feel in the slightest degree."

The reproach commonly levelled at the Confederates at that time was that they had murdered O'Connell. If it were said that the Whigs had murdered him, or that his son had brought down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, the suggestion would not have wanted probability; but it was hard upon men whom he had peremptorily forced out of his sphere of action, and had pursued into their privacy with imputations which time has proved to have been unfounded. We were held responsible for Fr. Kenyon's exaggerated language, for the Secession, and for the reaction. Gentlemen who had got, or were still expecting, employment from the Whigs, went up and down lamenting the injustice to which the country had lent itself. It soon became plain that a serious impression was produced on a people who are most accessible through their affections, and that we were witnessing one of the rapid transitions in popular feeling not uncommon in the annals of an emotional race. The long-protracted funeral fed this sentiment,* and rendered O'Connell's death a new element of trouble and confusion. It became a point of honour with many honest, simple-minded persons to hate men whose public career was without a stain, and who alone united zeal and capacity in such a degree as to promise any useful guidance to the people. Among mobs it took the only form of expression they understood; they threw stones "at the men who had killed the Liberator." The one drop of blood principle was not

* "Archæological Tracts." "Amhalgaidh, the son of Dathi, gained nine battles by sea and ten battles by land by exhibiting the dead body of his father."—*Hy. Fiachrach.*

considered applicable to the case, for our public meetings were assailed with bludgeons and stones in widely separated places. In Dublin, three weeks before the funeral, as we returned from a meeting,* an organised attack was made on the Confederates, and the chairman of the evening, Richard O'Gorman, senior, a comely and dignified gentleman, well advanced in years, was maltreated. As no one was better known or more generally esteemed in the city, there was wide indignation. It was easy to guard against a renewal of the attack by selecting a Confederate police out of the vigorous young men who constituted the bulk of the Confederates, and this was immediately done; but the outrage disheartened and dispirited men at the moment to an extent that was alarming. It seemed as if, in the language of Henri Heine, there was no longer a nation, there were only factions. Some talked of retiring, as if such a people were not worth an honest man's labour. Richard O'Gorman, who was naturally much moved by the assault on his father, asked O'Brien to consider whether the experiment of teaching and serving the people had not been fully made and been completely unsuccessful.†

* July 16th, '47.

† "We have been now for some months setting our principles before the Irish people. They have denied us their support. The most powerful class in Ireland have given their adhesion to the system we deprecate, and denounce us or stand by in silence while their fellows assail us. The Protestants have left us to fight their battle unaided. In fact, we have been abandoned by all except the Dublin Remonstrants and a few men here and there in the provinces. Now, thus situated, what good can we do? I believe we cannot crush the Repeal Association. Proving it to be corrupt is but a recommendation to a demoralised people. Think of Bishops Cantwell and MacHale, and of Dillon Browne, and Somers. What hope is there when such men dare do such things? The question then is—Have we given the people a sufficient trial? Or ought we continue to teach

But in truth mobs are everywhere alike, ready to do to-day what they will repent and execrate to-morrow. It was in the modern seat of English democracy that a mob burnt Priestley's library because he was suspected of being a Democrat; it was in imperial London that a mob followed a frenzied Scotch lord to arson and murder. Davis taught the true doctrine when he told the applauding audience on Burgh Quay, "If your shouts were given to our enemies, and your curses to us, we would work exactly as we are doing."

The General Election of 1847 will repay the careful study which an historical student bestows on a decisive campaign. It was an appeal to the people to help themselves, and its incidents will enable him to estimate what it was possible to accomplish on their behalf at that time.

The idea of the Confederates, and of the best men in the Irish Council, was that if a body of representatives were chosen of capacity and devotion, such as a nation in extremity ought to send out to speak its last word, they might still render impossible the barbarous policy of the Government. The administration at that time consisted of men without clear insight or strong convictions; some of them were old beaux superannuated in the drawing-room, who found a new excitement in

these unwilling pupils? Or with one manly, sorrowful, last exposition of our views, leave them in their guilt and misery until they see still further the consequences of their folly? These are serious questions; and I feel I am not competent to judge of them. I know my mind has been prejudiced and warped by what I have seen and heard for these last few weeks, above all by the scene of Thursday night."—"Cahirmoyle Correspondence," O'Gorman to O'Brien, July 17th, '47.

flirting with public affairs, while others were mere pedants or mere fribbles. Their weakness was Ireland's opportunity. If they could not be persuaded they might be shamed or intimidated into justice. But the unhappy country was represented by men who rendered the name of Irish member a word of reproach, who trafficked in petty employments, and even, it was believed, accepted personal alms from the Treasury, while those who were blameless were, for the most part, ciphers. To elect seventy Nationalists, which could easily have been done in 1844, was not to be expected while the Repeal Association was in alliance with the Whigs, but the number elected was of trifling importance compared to their character. They ought to be men as familiar with the wants and resources of the country as is a discreet merchant with his personal affairs, and whose hearts were steeped in its memories and hopes. O'Brien was such a man; but to find him seventy associates was not easy. Among the Confederates, Meagher and O'Gorman could have been induced to undertake the task; Dillon did not consider his income justified him in promising to give up his profession and live in London; Mitchel and I refused to endanger the *Nation* by habitual absence from Ireland; and among the special representatives of the Young Ireland party, we could find no other candidates. But we felt freer to deal with the circumstances because we manifestly had no personal aims to serve, and we took up in a sober, practical spirit the task of reorganising the Parliamentary Party. The private

correspondence of the period is full of the preliminary work.* What is most discernible is the universal desire among the constituencies for moderate men—that discreet class who stand aside when principles are vindicated, and, when the battle is over, present themselves as unobjectionable candidates for the laurels.

The Confederates, in an address signed by O'Brien, appealed to the country to select men devoted to nationality, of personal integrity, and of capacity and training, fit for such a trust, without regard to sectional divisions. The Repeal Association insisted that the sole and sufficient qualification was to be a member of that body; and as it had no candidates at its disposal, they were manufactured by the process of admitting new men acceptable to Mr. John O'Connell, and ambitious of getting into Parliament, who generally

* "The result of the Drogheda inquiry is that our friends think Sir Colman O'Loghlen, or some moderate man, would be returned, but not Meagher or O'Gorman. This is rank cowardice, but there is no cure at present. Carlow is disposed of to a Whig (John Sadlier, afterwards so notorious). I send you a circular I procured from that borough. Fagan will stand (for Cork city) if a second suitable candidate can be found. Sir John McNeill is spoken of, and we have directed the parties mentioning him to get exact information" . . . "Mr. Ross (of Bladensburgh) was out of town, but I saw him yesterday. He will not attempt to get a seat in this Parliament, and his resolution is taken on grounds that do honour to his feelings as a gentleman. It appears that some of his Tory friends in Newry, suspecting that he was a Repealer, pressed him on the subject. And his answer, though of course not a denial, amounted to such an evasion of the truth as has outraged his conscience, and he is determined to punish himself by making no further attempt on any seat for the present" . . . "Hodnet, of Youghal, wrote to Dillon and Doheny for a candidate for that borough, not openly committed to either section of Repealers. I spoke to Leslie Foster without mentioning any constituency, and I find he will not take the anti-place pledge. He thinks places an excellent resource for young gentlemen of moderate fortune . . . Richard O'Gorman saw O'Gorman Mahon in Liverpool last week, and I fancy if he gets into Ennis he will help us all he can."—"Cahirmoyle Correspondence." Duffy to O'Brien.

paid a subscription of five pounds, and came to be known as Five-Pound Repealers. The men who had voted against Lord George Bentinck's railway scheme, and against the proposal to improve Irish fisheries, the most discreditable of the band who bought and sold places, were individually received and warmly recommended for re-election by John and Maurice O'Connell. These were the friends to be relied on, and "in the name of their perishing fellow-countrymen, in the name of God," they exhorted the constituencies to support "only such true Repealers." The question upon which the success of the experiment turned was place-begging. To choose men who would negotiate for personal favours with the Secretary of the Treasury was to render any success in the national object hopeless. The Confederates, and many men who without being Confederates recognised the necessary conditions of the case, proposed a pledge to repeal candidates against this practice. But the people were warned that these theorists were at bottom their enemies, "the men who had killed the Liberator," and that their projects were absurd and wicked; and the people in their sore extremity could discriminate imperfectly between truth and duplicity.

Mr. John O'Connell set the example of refusing to take the pledge. If the name he bore was not an adequate guarantee—which with a brother and two brothers-in-law, and a train of cousins and comrades in office, for which they had abandoned their principles, perhaps it was not—he would condescend to no more.

On these conditions the populace of Limerick city, where the middle class were mostly Confederates, elected him.* But this was not enough. For further *éclat* Kilkenny city, where half of the population were receiving public relief, elected him also. If the reader is ignorant how far his "adequate guarantee" answered its purpose he may be told that within a year of this double election the proposer of the Peace Resolutions was being drilled in a Dublin barracks as a captain of militia; and in 1857 he retired on the well-salaried office of Clerk of the Haneper—vacated by his brother-in-law, who had been a Repeal member in 1835—in which employment he died.

In the county Cork, Denny Lane proposed a pledge against place-begging, and the candidates were understood to accept it. One of them, Dr. Maurice Power, a new man, was threatened with the opposition of Conciliation Hall if he did not recant this humiliating submission, and at the last minute he attempted to retreat. A considerable party in the County Club would have thrown him over, but the majority, many of them parish priests of decisive influence, assented to the principle, but would not consent to impose a pledge on a man in whose integrity they had full confidence. Dr. Power was elected, and after an apprenticeship under the Whig whipper-in retired from Parliament to be governor of a Crown Colony. But the Whig alliance had more

* The Limerick election was probably traceable to the letter written by Fr. Kenyon on the occasion of O'Connell's death. A month before the election O'Brien warned us that this stronghold of the Confederates would be lost by that offence.

decisive victories. In the open constituencies of Louth, Cavan, and Limerick, gentlemen were chosen who afterwards became Whig ministers; and Kildare, Galway, Meath, Westmeath, and Roscommon, Whig partisans in some cases slightly disguised as Repealers. In Kerry County, against the clamorous resistance of the people, a Whig country gentleman was permitted a walk over, to secure the undisputed election of Mr. Morgan John O'Connell for the second seat; and Clare was divided between a Tory professing himself a Nationalist and a Whig professing himself a Repealer. In Mayo, George Henry Moore, then a new man standing as a Federalist, but destined to become much more in the end, replaced Mr. McDonnell. But his colleague, Mr. Dillon Browne, who was a type of the worst class of Irish member and of the worst class of place-beggar, got re-elected. The offence which his constituents best understood was his vote against Lord George Bentinck's railway scheme, and he defended himself to their satisfaction, it appeared, by alleging that before the division he consulted O'Connell, who approved of his vote. It was a subject of grave surprise that O'Connell's family did not contradict this dishonouring statement, but it elicited no denial.

The fate of the boroughs was nearly as discouraging. Mr. Patrick Somers, who had long held Sligo, was not the representative of any Irish sentiment or interest. He was simply one of the mercenaries serving in a small band of personal adherents recruited by Lord Palmerston, and to be a member of Parliament was the pursuit

by which he lived. The Sligo Repealers, weary of the discredit of his name, sent an address to Conciliation Hall, signed by over a hundred electors, asking for a suitable candidate. But their request was repulsed. Maurice O'Connell declared he would go down on his knees to secure the election of his friend Somers; and with the help of a vigorous mob, and the support of Lord Palmerston's tenantry, he obtained his election. Drogheda was also eager to elect a Repealer. To the request for a suitable candidate, Conciliation Hall replied by sending down a Financial Agent from London, supported by a deputation, of whom Mr. J. H. Dunne was the most notable member. The natural result was the re-election of Sir William Somerville, the Chief Secretary. To the neighbouring borough of Dundalk they sent an American of mixed Scotch and Irish descent, Mr. Carroll MacTavish, who called at the Castle *en route* to promise the Government his support in case of election. But as the Government had a candidate of their own in the field, his secret was ill kept. He got the majority of votes, but was ousted on petition by Mr. Torrens McCullagh, a Federalist, who supported the Government.*

In Athlone, Mr. William Keogh presented himself in the character of an independent candidate. His independence was understood to consist in having his election

* Of Mr. MacTavish, who was a Five Pound Repealer, a poet of the day wrote to a popular tune:—

"Happy McTavish,
Thou who couldst ravish
A good snug borough with a Five Pound Note."

expenses paid by Mr. Attwood, an English banker, in return for pledged support on certain financial crazes or quackeries of which that gentleman was the interpreter. The organ of Conciliation Hall denounced him as a Young Irelander, and recommended as a substitute an English attorney, who had become a Five-Pound Repealer. The *Nation* declared that he was no more a Young Irelander than a New Zealander, and advised the constituency to repel both the strangers in favour of a local man. But Mr. Attwood's arguments proved irresistible among men at the point of starvation, and Mr. Keogh secured a small majority.*

In Dublin city a respectable merchant was proposed who would have been supported by both sections of Repealers; but Mr. John Reynolds, a demagogue not embarrassed by scruples, insisted on putting himself forward, and the other retired. None of the national journals supported Mr. Reynolds, and no one believed he would be elected; but at the moment, Thresham Gregg, leader of the Protestant democracy, was indignant with one of the Tory candidates—Mr. Gregory †—for lacking zeal for Protestant ascendancy, and was ready to support any one against him. The Government and their friends considered Mr. Reynolds very suitable for their purpose, and silently and with shamed faces polled for him. Many Nationalists, considering a bad Repealer better than none, voted for him also, and he got elected.

* Mr. Keogh, afterwards Mr. Justice Keogh. His chief patron during his connection with the borough was the Bishop of Elphin, who visited Conciliation Hall to denounce the Young Irelanders.

† Now Sir William Gregory, K.C.M.G.

He taught them in the end, however, the moral lesson that a disreputable advocate is worse than none, by bringing reproach for many a day on the cause with which he was associated.

Dungarvan was a subject of much interest, because the abandonment of that borough to the Whigs had been at the root of the Secession. The local Repealers applied to Conciliation Hall for a candidate, and were promised one. That they might not again, in their own words, be "the cause of shame to themselves and Ireland," they sent a requisition signed by a hundred electors, and requested that it might be presented to Mr. Anstey or Mr. John Augustus O'Neill. Mr. John O'Connell disparaged Mr. Anstey, and declared that he was not authorised to propose Mr. O'Neill. After a fortnight, during which he was assured the constituency were becoming "furious," he announced that Sir John Scott Lillie, a major-general in the British army, would contest the seat as a Repealer. The committee asked for General Lillie's address, but for ten days got no reply. They were then informed that his great respect for O'Connell would not allow him to stand against his best friend, Richard Sheil. No candidate was ever sent. On the eve of the election, John Francis Maguire* was proposed; but it was too late, and the Master of the Mint was re-elected by a majority of sixteen. On the next occasion that offered, when Conciliation Hall counted for nothing, Mr. Maguire got elected triumphantly.

* Afterwards M.P. for Dungarvan, and later for Cork city.

The result of the General Election was significant: out of the members chosen at a time of calamity and terror, when the pledge against place-taking was pronounced superfluous and an insult to honourable men, nearly twenty afterwards accepted places for themselves, and more than twenty habitually begged places for others. Some of them, indeed, were men who broke no pledges in accepting office, but of these scarcely one could have got elected but for the alliance between the Repeal Association and the Government. The most disheartening and tragic fact was the blindness of the people, who in their mortal peril were unable to distinguish imposters from honest men.

Against the opinions of the Confederates the country had plainly declared by a decisive majority. Not one Confederate was elected, or as much as induced to become a candidate. Meagher declined an invitation from Dublin, and O'Gorman another from Limerick, both being merely sectional movements which did not promise success. They were even subject to what looked like a humiliating defeat. Fr. Kenyon, in whom a strain of eccentric wilfulness was very notable, proposed O'Gorman for Limerick without his consent, and against his remonstrance. At the moment he was the man the Old Irelanders most utterly loathed; and among his own class he stood as isolated and feared as Swift in his day among the dignitaries of the Irish Establishment. His action provoked the mob to such a condition of frenzy that his life was in danger. The police and some of his brother priests with difficulty rescued him out of

their hands, and there was practically no contest in a city where the middle class had repeatedly declared for the Confederation. When the result of the dissolution was summed up, Conciliation Hall had gained something, the Whigs much, and the Confederates little or nothing. At Cork, they had secured the election of Mr. Fagan, at Galway of Mr. O'Flaherty, and at Youghal of Mr. Anstey. Meagher's father, Mr. John Thomas Devereux, and some others who adhered to Conciliation Hall, were men of probity and public spirit. Several English members, W. J. Fox and Colonel Thompson among the Free Traders, and Mr. Urquhart, who headed a little party of his own, had declared frankly for Repeal. Mr. Monsell and Mr. Grogan Morgan, the most respectable of the country gentlemen chosen, professed a conditional nationality which it was hoped would ripen later.* But the opportunity of making a parliamentary party which would reverse the policy of the Government was gone. They had saved their honour, and that was nearly all. They had set an example of steady adherence to principle indeed which the country greatly needed. Meagher abstained from voting for his father at Waterford because he would not take the pledge against place-begging, and O'Brien refused to support his brother in Clare because he toyed with nationality, but would not avow himself a Repealer. In his own constituency he declined to secure a walk over by standing in connection with Mr. Caleb Powell, who was a Whig Repealer.

* "I am most ready to advocate domestic legislation, limited to domestic purposes, wherever I can do so with the slightest probability of success, remote or immediate."—*Mr. Monsell.*

And none of them sought any personal victory. When the hope of making an effective party disappeared, O'Brien thought of confining his exertions to Ireland, and asked his constituents to accept his resignation.* But they persisted in electing him in his absence.

There was nothing which tried the mettle of the men so closely as their refusal to accept candidates of doubtful principle who desired to fight under their colours. Among the recruits of this class who offered themselves was Mr. Edward Kenealy, LL.B., afterwards noted in connection with the Tichborne trial, and the Magna Charta Societies of England. He wrote to me privately expressing his great, etc., etc., and enclosing an election address to Trinity College, in which he mimicked the tone of the *Nation* with considerable skill:—

"Two millions of our population," he said, "have miserably perished within the last twelve months without one wise or well-founded effort on the part of our Government to stay the calamity, etc., etc. Why is this? Think you that the cause of these deaths is to be found in the famine? Not so. In this country, as well as in Ireland, the scarcity has been very great; prices high and food deficient. But no Englishman has died of hunger—no Englishwoman has fallen down in the public streets in the agonies of starvation. And why? . . . We should direct our hostility rather against the *system* which has made us powerless to meet the famine and to repel it,—the system which has pauperised and enslaved us, and driven us to solicit on our knees a little portion of our own from our unfeeling legislators,—the system which day by day drains us of our money, of our men, of our blood and

* "Plenty of candidates can be found; men who will send a five-pound note to Conciliation Hall, and swear fidelity to Repeal, with the intention of bartering the cause of their country for place whenever a suitable opportunity shall present itself."—W. S. O'Brien to his Election Committee.

sinew as a people,—the system which robbed us of our Constitution, because it feared the power of the Constitution, and converted us from an independent people into starving colonists. *That system is the Union;* and in the utter and eternal annihilation of that system is to be found the only remedy for Irish difficulties."

But we declined to adopt the gentleman on any terms; he had distinguished himself upon several occasions in the courts of law, not as a practitioner, but as a defendant, and was not in the least the sort of recruit we were in search of. "Fr. Prout," who feared we might not be sufficiently well informed on the subject, sent me a characteristic note of warning:—

"Is Repeal become such a common utensil that any scamp can make a temporary convenience of it? I am forced to ask you this rough but honest question, seeing by the *Morning Post* of this day the announcement of a person called Kenealy as 'Repeal Candidate' for Dublin University! The ink is scarce dry on his fingers since he wrote (for hire), in the *Dublin University Magazine*, the foul words 'dog-faced demagogue of nine-and-twenty,' alluding to the late pure-souled and gifted Tom Davis; and as to Repeal itself, he has spat upon it over and over again in that depraved collection of blasphemy, 'Brallaghan, or the Deipnosophists,' the whole edition of which, for lack of a bookseller willing to assume the responsibility of its regular publication, was sold by auction the other day for a few pounds, and copies are to be had for a few pence on the stalls of the 'New Cut' and Holywell Street. You must be surely aware that this youth, who talks of 'supporting the Established Church in its integrity,' is himself the son of a R. C. whisky shopkeeper, who, &c. Notoriety of any kind will suit this person. Pray do not gratify him by your notice; and if you are to contest Dublin University on Repeal

principles do not pick up a candidate out of the foulest Cloaca of London."*

A letter of that era written by Dillon from circuit, to his wife, a little time before the contest commenced, enables us to see the difficulties of the time through the eyes of a just and temperate man :—

"In one of your letters I find something about Duffy and the *Nation*, to which I believe I have not yet given any reply. I entirely agree with you that the *Nation* does not handle the elections with as much vigour and earnestness as one might expect from it. But, at the same time, I acquit Duffy and Mitchel of all blame in the matter. Under the circumstances, it would be almost impossible for them to write with energy or spirit, seeing the unhappy conditions in which these elections have found the country. Is it not a reflection to make one sad that the military power of England, which three years since seemed hardly sufficient to cope with our united strength, now finds occupation in endeavouring to keep the peace between us? What do Englishmen say? That, if we had Repeal, the fury which is now exhausted upon England and the Saxon would be speedily turned against each other; and that we would never cease cutting each other's throats until our old benefactor and pacificator (meaning England) would step in again to put an end to our broils and our independence. Now, I greatly fear that in the view of many well-meaning persons, in Ireland and out of it, this answer to our demand will acquire great plausibility from the fierce animosity which now exists between Young

* Dr. Kenealy afterwards got himself admitted a member of a Confederate Club in London, and became its president. The club recommended him as a fitting member of the Central Council, but the Council, who desired to confine the management of the cause to sincere and reputable men, refused to confirm the nomination.†

† As the elections approached, I find in a letter to O'Brien this characteristic fact :—"Kenealy has written a letter to McGlashan (publisher of the *University Magazine*), apoligising for his sneer at Davis, which McGlashan sent me yesterday." —*Duffy to OBrien.*

and Old Ireland. Surely they will be universally regarded as a nation of children, who deserve to be whipped into civilisation. As for the idea of 'turning out' with a set of fellows who could break each other's heads about moral and physical force, I will only say of it that he who could seriously entertain it would be a commander worthy of such an army. The upshot of all this is, that, unless I see moral and physical force, and Young and Old Ireland, utterly abolished by the common-sense of the country within the next six months, I will then feel myself bound in conscience to withdraw all aid and countenance from what I will then consider a mischievous delusion—viz., any agitation for repealing the Union. However, I do not despair; but on the contrary have considerable hope that, within the period I have mentioned, something effective will be done, and I lose no opportunity of contributing towards that result. I had a long talk with the bishop of this diocese a few days since, and I laboured hard, and, I think, not altogether unsuccessfully, to impress these views upon him, and I make it a rule to preach them to every priest I meet."

There was one mistake committed by the Confederates which must not be hidden away. Mr. Chisholm Anstey, a Tasmanian by birth, but an English barrister and politician, was a member of the Confederation, and desired to enter Parliament on its programme. Mr. Anstey would not excite the prejudice which existed at the moment against the Young Irelanders, and it would be easy getting him a seat. But some of the Council thought it would amount to an abandonment of principle to send an Englishman to represent Irish nationality under any circumstances. They would rather, they averred, never win Repeal than win it by electing a single Englishman. But this was too much in the vein of the Head Pacificator to prove very persuasive.

O'Brien thought Mr. Anstey ought to be supported, and Dillon, Mitchel, and I were of the same opinion. The reasons which influenced us were patent at that time. Mr. Anstey represented a political party which, though not numerous, was singularly active, assiduous, and persistent; and this party promised to support the Repeal of the Union.*

Its leader was a remarkable man—David Urquhart. He was regarded by a little band of associates as a political prophet; and though the world did not stone him like the prophets of old, a scornful generation pelted him a good deal with epigrams. My own conviction was, and is, that he was rarely gifted, remarkably well-informed, and wholly honest; but that he appraised his own powers with an exaggeration

* "Auspicious might be the words 'Repeal of the Legislative Union between England and Ireland' if they announced a revulsion in our national judgment, and a drawing backwards of our steps from the fatal bourne of Centralisation. To this Centralisation we owe the practical difficulties in which we are involved, the mental confusion by which we are surrounded, the multiplication and the powerlessness of laws, the extinction of the knowledge of affairs and of citizenship. In this fatal course of England, there is no arrestation until she has made up her mind to restore what she has destroyed, and to destroy what she has recently built up. . . The country has to be saved from the Parliament, and sense has to be restored to the country. Neither the one nor the other can be done save by giving to the people an interest in their own business by the practical management of it. Nor are the worst parts of this Centralisation of very ancient date—they are of little more than a century's duration; and from the time of Walpole down to the present day, the most notable event in the progress of the system has been this very union of Ireland with England" (David Urquhart, *Portfolio*, 1844). We did not magnify the importance of our new allies. In the "Cahirmoyle Correspondence" I find a contemporary letter which rather under than over estimates them:—"I know Urquhart's character. His party would make *one element* in an English Repeal movement; but if they alone appeared in the field for us, I fancy it would do us more harm than good. He has the reputation among the sober middle classes who support Peel of being wild, and perhaps crazed; whereas, it is hard practical men that would give the Irish question a respectable character in their eyes."—*Duffy to O'Brien.*

which amounted almost to lunacy. To him Europe certainly owes the Turkish bath; he made the Suez Canal, his admirers insist, as much as if he dug every shovel-full of it with his own hands, and they have some grounds for contending that the picturesque politics of Young England, where the nobility followed by their faithful vassals were to snatch the sovereign from the odious dominion of the middle class, and restore the ancient constitution of the realm, was a sort of foppish Urquhartism imitated by Mr. Disraeli from the original projection. But to Mr. Urquhart himself these were bagatelles; his special mission he considered was to watch over the interests of the Eastern nations, Mahomedan and Christian, which he did, indeed, as assiduously as the philosopher in Rasselas watched over the solar system; and to restore England to simplicity and truth. His domestic politics had slight attraction for me. A return to the old constitution meant, it seems, the extinction of Customs, Excise, and the New Poor-Law, and, above all, of Responsible Government, and the erection of barriers against parliamentary encroachment on the royal prerogative. The authority of the sovereign, as the permanent representative of the nation, was to be restored and strengthened; but how the restored authority would be guarded from the influence of favourites and mistresses was not specified. The cursed thing called modern civilisation, however, was the worst enemy of all; it destroyed the natural simplicity of men's character, and extinguished their power of seeing things as they are, and when vanity—

the great perverter of heart, brain, and conscience—was added, made modern Englishmen as unlike real men as the figures in Madame Tussaud's waxworks. But the opinions by which Mr. Urquhart was best known at that time were his dread of Russia and his scorn of Lord Palmerston. The barbaric empire of the North, where the will of one man controlled the savage force of seventy millions, whose policy, projected of old by a master mind, and worked out with a relentless diplomacy which shrunk neither from fraud nor murder, was the one great danger to Europe. It had its emissaries and spies everywhere, even among statesmen and princes, and one of its hired agents was Lord Palmerston. "When a young man, being poor and eager for pleasure," so the legend ran, "he had sold himself to Russia, and now at his meridian was held in subjection by the fear of exposure."* The upshot of Mr. Anstey's career was a warning against imported members; he became in the end a henchman of Lord Palmerston.†

* Mr. Urquhart produced evidence, which time has abundantly confirmed, that Lord Palmerston was unscrupulous in dealing with public documents, and had repeatedly misled Parliament by mangled protocols and state-papers; but his sale to Russia I thought a delusion. In later years, when one finds Lord Palmerston making a similar charge against Urquhart and Anstey, of being in the pay of France—Anstey being a person upon whom he afterwards bestowed a judicial office, and Urquhart a man above all suspicion of personal corruption—it is difficult to altogether suppress awkward doubts respecting a statesman to whom the naked truth seemed never to be welcome when a pleasant pretence or makeshift could be substituted for it. "I happen to know," he says, in a letter to his brother, "in a very curious way, that those two (Urquhart and Anstey) and a third man, an ally of theirs and the editor of the *Portfolio*, Westmacott, got from Louis Philippe, for their attacks on me, something not short of £60,000, first and last."—Mr. Evelyn Ashley's "Life of Lord Palmerston," p. 366.

† Mr. Urquhart, who remained, faithful to his undertaking, held a meeting of his constituents, and with the Protestant rector, the Presby-

The result of the elections was a puzzle almost as much as it was a miscarriage. But looking back, when time has made these transactions historical, they present no difficulty. The aphorism of the philosopher is unchangeably true, that the thing men have been taught to believe is the thing they will do. The people had been taught to believe in evil doctrines, practices, and men, and this election, and much that followed, was merely their belief put into action. In many of the doctrines and practices, and in the men universally, no one now has the smallest faith, because other teaching has prevailed; but had we known human nature better, we would not have hoped to transform opinion by a sudden wrench.

After such a result, the young men might well despair of the country in that generation. But if they had some natural misgivings, they did not abandon their work for an hour, but continued to do their duty in simple good faith, like soldiers whom nothing but death could discharge from their fealty.

The Irish Council reassembled after the elections. A few of the new members of Parliament, half-a-dozen barristers, some intelligent Dublin traders, and the Young Irelanders were its working force. Lord Cloncurry suggested that the food grown in the country ought to be retained in it, and Henry Fitzgibbon supported the proposal. If the corn was carried away, it would prove impossible, he said, to save the people from

terian minister, and the Catholic priest around him, obtained their consent to propose to Parliament on their behalf a repeal of the Union.

starvation.* But the Council was far from being prepared for so decisive a measure. A southern Board of Guardians† recommended that to avoid the waste incurred by repeated commercial transactions, a parish committee should be authorised to receive from each ratepayer a portion of his produce equivalent to his assessment under the poor-rate, which the committee would distribute to agricultural labourers employed on the contributors' farms, in proportion to their respective claims. Mitchel brought up a report recommending this plan, and suggesting that the resident proprietors might consent to receive their rents in corn and cattle, which could be paid out to labourers in the same manner. But the Council were still less prepared for this project. And had they accepted it, it is not probable that it would have been adopted on one estate in Ireland. Some persons of a realistic turn suggested if tithe and tithe rent-charge were to be paid in kind, that during the famine diseased potatoes would be a suitable offering. These deliberations came to little in the end. There was too much secret distrust, and too little guiding power. Another hope, died out, and over the dead sea of misery no steadfast beacon could be discerned.

But resentment or apathy was impossible in face of the tidings which still came with every post. The state of the country grew worse from day to day. It is difficult now to realise the condition of the western

* Mr. Fitzgibbon was brother to the late Master in Chancery and uncle to the present Lord Justice of Appeal in Ireland.

† The Guardians of Clogheen.

population in the autumn of 1847; but a witness of unexceptionable impartiality has painted it in permanent colours. A young Englishman representing the Society of Friends, who in that tragic time did work worthy of the Good Samaritan, reported what he saw in Mayo and Galway in language which for plain vigour rivals the narratives of Defoe. This is what he saw in Westport:—

"The town of Westport was in itself a strange and fearful sight, like what we read of in beleagured cities; its streets crowded with gaunt wanderers, sauntering to and fro with hopeless air and hunger-struck look—a mob of starved, almost naked, women around the poor-house clamouring for soup tickets—our inn, the head-quarters of the road engineer and pay clerks, beset by a crowd of beggars for work."

As he approached Galway, the rural population were found to be in a more miserable condition:—

"Some of the women and children that we saw on the road were abject cases of poverty and almost naked. The few rags they had on were with the greatest difficulty held together, and in a few weeks, as they are utterly unable to provide themselves with fresh clothes unless they be given them, they must become absolutely naked."

And in another district:—

"As we went along, our wonder was not that the people died, but that they lived; and I have no doubt whatever that in any other country the mortality would have been far greater: that many lives have been prolonged, perhaps saved, by the long apprenticeship to want in which the Irish peasant has been trained, and by that lovely, touching charity which prompts him to share his scanty meal with his starving neighbour."

The fishermen of the Cladagh, who were induced to send the Whig Attorney-General to Parliament a few months before, had to pledge the implements of their calling for a little daily bread :—

"Even the very nets and tackling of these poor fishermen, I heard, were pawned, and, unless they be assisted to redeem them, they will be unable to take advantage of the herring shoals, even when they approach their coast. . . . In order to ascertain the truth of this statement, I went into two or three of the largest pawnshops, the owners of which fully confirmed it and said they had in pledge at least a thousand pounds' worth of such property and saw no likelihood of its being redeemed."

In a rural district which he revisited after an interval he paints a scene which can scarcely be matched in the annals of a mediæval plague :—

"One poor woman whose cabin I had visited said, 'There will be nothing for us but to lie down and die.' I tried to give her hope of English aid, but, alas! her prophecy has been too true. Out of a population of 240 I found thirteen already dead from want. The survivors were like walking skeletons—the men gaunt and haggard, stamped with the livid mark of hunger—the children crying with pain—the women in some of the cabins too weak to stand. When there before I had seen cows at almost every cabin, and there were besides many sheep and pigs owned in the village. But now all the sheep were gone—all the cows—all the poultry killed—only one pig left—the very dogs which had barked at me before had disappeared—no potatoes—no oats." *

* Speaking of Clifden, he says, "To get to their work many of the men have to walk five, even seven, Irish miles; the sergeant of a police station by the road-side told us that the custom of these men was to take a little meal gruel before starting in the morning, taking but one meal one day and treating themselves with two the next. He mentioned cases in which

The young man pointed the moral which these horrible spectacles suggested with laudable courage :—

"I would not now discuss the causes of this condition, nor attempt to apportion blame to its authors; but of this one fact there can be no question: that the result of our social system is that vast numbers of our fellow-countrymen—of the peasantry of one of the richest nations the world ever knew—have not leave to live. Surely such a social result as this is not only a national misfortune but a national sin crying loudly to every Christian citizen to do his utmost to remove it. No one of us can have a right to enjoy either riches or repose until to the extent of his ability he strive to wash himself of all share in the guilt of this fearful inequality, which will be a blot in the history of our country and make her a by-word among the nations."

By the light of these transactions all the subsequent history of Ireland becomes plain. Was tranquillity or contentment possible in such a country? Was it desirable, or permissible? Was any price too high to pay for the chance of deliverance from a dominion which inflicted or permitted horrors like these?

The witness is still forthcoming, and time has not diminished the authority of his name. He has since become an eminent member of Parliament, and has more than once been a prominent minister of the Crown.*

they had worked till they fell over their tools. Four-and-sixpence per week thus earned, the sole resource of a family of six, with Indian meal, their cheapest food, at 2/10 to 4/- per stone! What is this but slow death —a mere enabling the patient to endure for a little longer time the disease of hunger?"

* Mr. W. E. Forster, M.P. These extracts are taken from the transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends.

CHAPTER IV.

CONFEDERATE COUNSEL.

A CONFERENCE of the Confederates rises to my memory like a picture in some familiar gallery. O'Brien, stately, well-poised, and carefully dressed, gracious but not genial, speaking with a diffidence which implied that he regarded himself merely a peer among his peers; Cane, tall as a grenadier, and burly in proportion, slow of speech, and fond of ponderous phrases; and Barry, slight, agile, undersized, prompt of utterance, but never impatient or importunate if he was anticipated; Dillon's pensive brown eyes and mien of cavalier and gentleman, and O'Gorman's handsome, smiling face, making a strange contrast with Doheny, with a visage like the full moon, and clothes which looked slovenly and ill-made, even when he wore the gay uniform of the Eighty-two Club; Meagher, silent and slightly foppish; Mitchel, absorbed and thoughtful till his time came to speak, twisting unconsciously a lock of his silken hair round his finger; McGee's uncomely expressive face, and large dark eyes lighted up with smiles, which were, perhaps, too universally conciliatory; and Reilly, exploding in fun, or silent, moody, and distempered. The council-chamber—a plain apartment, with only essential furniture, and for decoration a map of Ireland and a green flag furled.

The daily labours and nightly thoughts of these men were given to the design, so often baffled, of uniting the whole nation in its own defence. They still believed that a section of the gentry would at last do their duty. And whatever may be men's final judgment on the probability of success in that enterprize, they had substantial reason at the time to think that their wishes would be accomplished. O'Brien, who habitually understated his hopes, and whose promises were always taken at a premium, wrote to me :—

"If you are careful in your management, it is not impossible that a large portion of the Irish landlord gentry may unite with us, or we with them, before very long. They are thoroughly disgusted with England's management of Irish concerns, but are afraid of the ultra-Democratic and ultra-Catholic tendencies of a portion of the Repeal party."

In 1795, Tone recognised that the preliminary condition of success in any national movement was to bring in the Catholics to co-operate with the Protestant Reformers; in 1847 the equally essential condition was to bring in the Protestants to co-operate with the Catholic Reformers. We had long laboured for this end, and in the autumn of 1847 the evidence of progress was striking. The *University Magazine*, supported by the gentry and the clergy of the Established Church, proclaimed that it was not possible only, but probable, that the Union would be repealed."* The political

* A compact Repeal party in Parliament may be far more formidable than an organised and armed insurrection; nay, such a party may so obstruct and embarrass the business of legislation—may so effectually co-operate with the public enemy, or so promote and cover the designs and

organ of the Conservatives in Dublin took the same tone. Several of the gentry employed language which implied that they were in serious trouble, and ready to accept any escape from it. Mr. Chetwode—an English proprietor settled in Ireland, a man whose character and station lent weight to his words—proposed that the hundred and five Irish members should be assembled in the edifice where Irish members were accustomed to deliberate of old, and there declare their wishes. The provincial press, which represented the Protestant middle class, was more direct and specific in its profession of nationality.* It was manifestly impatient for the signal to join hands with the Repealers.

purposes of treason, that, to restore the equilibrium of the Senate, Ireland may be thrown off with far less compunction than a sea-captain in a storm casts treasures overboard to right his staggering vessel."—*Dublin University Magazine.*

* "We must have some set-off against the disadvantages, the plunder of the Union, else the Union must be dissolved."—*Kilkenny Moderator* (Conservative).

"Abstractedly, it cannot be denied, we have a right to a domestic Parliament; and even the firmest friends of the Union will admit that that measure was carried by corruption unparalleled in history. It may, then, be asked—'Why not join the Confederation?' The leading Conservative papers in Dublin—the *Mail* and *Packet*—though giving it a species of pseudo-opposition, are unquestionably on the verge of declaring for nationality. They appear to be sounding the sentiments of the Protestant gentry preparatory to throwing off the mask and revealing themselves as advocates of Repeal. Men of the north, it is time you were beginning to consider what place you shall occupy."—*Belfast Protestant Journal.*

"We would willingly hope that the tendency of which this defection is an indication is isolated in its character, though we are painfully aware of the radical change of political sentiment which is rapidly growing up in districts remarkable for their hereditary attachment to doctrines the reverse of those which, in their practical meaning, are taught by the missionaries of the Irish Confederation."—*Derry Standard* (Presbyterian).

"We have remarked with delight the growing nationalism of the Irish Conservative press. The *Newry Telegraph* had lately one of the most Irish articles we have read within a year; the *Carlow Sentinel* has produced a spirited and reasoned answer to the falsehoods and ribaldry of the London journals; one of the keenest and most constant assailants of the Ecclesiastical Commission (for destroying our ancient churches), is the

To turn this sentiment to account, we approached leading Protestant politicians in Ulster, who were not represented in the Irish Council, and urged them to action. But "confidence is a plant of slow growth," and needed time, when the condition of the country made delay fatal. The Ulster Presbyterians had organised themselves in defence of their tenant-right, which recent legislation had menaced, and we endeavoured to induce them to join with the rest of Ireland in demanding the right to manage our own affairs. Their spokesman was Dr. McKnight. He had probably no fundamental objection to the doctrine of the Volunteers, but he believed he could not carry his party with him. They were willing to join with the south, but on the land question only.

"In Ulster we have a special claim, which, as it gives us a powerful advantage in argument, as well as in equity, we do not relinquish; but we are nevertheless fighting, and are resolved to fight, the battle of Tipperary, in common with that of Derry. In keeping to this one point, I have a decided prospect of being able to do some practical permanent good for my poor country. If I went further, I should confer little advantage upon any other party, and I would deprive myself of the power of doing that which I conceive to be the first and most essential service I can possibly render to Ireland, under present circumstances." *

John Martin, who lived among them, and was of their race and religion as much as their accredited

Kilkenny Moderator; the *Packet* of this city is, or we are much mystified, one of the honestest of our public journals, and it certainly ranks high for ability."—*Nation*, Jan. 30.

* *Nation* Correspondence, McKnight to Duffy. Dr. McKnight was at that time editor of the *Derry Standard*, afterwards editor of the *Banner of Ulster*, the organ of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

leaders, believed that they could be won to a complete co-operation with the rest of Ireland; and with characteristic directness and sincerity made the experiment. He visited Belfast to prepare for a Confederate meeting to receive a deputation from Dublin, or, if that proved impracticable, a meeting, at any rate, to consider the condition of the country, and how it could best be helped.

"I suppose Mitchel has told you already all the little news I gave him about Belfast—how everybody there considers a Confederate meeting a measure of rather dangerous policy. Yet I still think a successful meeting may be held. Messrs. Skeyne, McVeigh, and McLoughlin warmly declare their readiness to exert themselves in getting up one, provided the Council, on deliberation, desire it. After my return I wrote notes on the subject of a political meeting of the character of the Irish Council to R. J. Tennent, Robert McDowell, Dr. Cooke, Dr. Montgomery, Dr. Denvir, and Dr. Edgar.* I have no replies as yet from Drs. Cooke, Denvir, and Montgomery. Mr. McDowell pointedly informs me he is 'a Repealer, but not a moral-force one.' He speaks with regret of the deficiency of public spirit in Belfast, tells of his consulting parties on the subject of my note without success, and warmly offers his services in any way in case we get up a meeting. Mr. R. J. Tennent's reply came to-day. It is very frank and kindly; and he confesses to strong, almost devoted, feelings of nationality. He speaks, too, of having con-

* Robert James Tennent was the leader of the Belfast Whigs, and afterwards member of Parliament for that town; Robert McDowell was a leading merchant, sometime President of the Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Cooke, a Presbyterian clergyman of the orthodox school, was leader of the Tories; Dr. Montgomery was the principal Unitarian minister in Ulster; Dr. Denvir was the Catholic Bishop; and Dr. Edgar a spokesman of the Teetotallers. It was as practicable to move the Cave Hill to the banks of the Laggan as to draw Dr. Cooke or Dr. Edgar into a national movement; but they might, it was hoped, have compassion on the victims of famine, and help to apply the only adequate remedy.

sulted various parties—Repealers and Non-Repealers—on the subject of my note previously to answering it. But I am afraid he is morally timid. He talks about the 'softening down of party bitterness,' and objects to our proposed meeting as tending to interrupt such softening down. He falls into the common mistake of those who will have us to be a mere party or faction, seeking factious objects, affiliated by party signs and watchwords. By-the-by, you, Mr. Charles Duffy, must do me the favour of writing an article—Class A 1—on this very subject, 'Nationality, as contradistinguished from Whiggery, Toryism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Landlordism, Tenantism, Landed Interest, Commercial Interest, Capital Interest, Labour Interest.' Make it so clear, so forcible, so overwhelming in reason, that the thick mists of ignorance and prejudice covering over the common-sense and scumming over the natural good feelings of our countrymen shall not avail to hide from them the great truths of Nationality."

It may seem no extravagant hope that Irishmen in Belfast should make common cause, in a national calamity, with Irishmen in Dublin and Cork. No Englishman loves England less because he lives north or south of the Thames, or because he is a Tory or Whig, Episcopalian or Dissenter; but in Ireland these distinctions were sometimes barriers as solid as the great wall of China. Smith O'Brien appealed to Sharman Crawford on the same subject; but though Mr. Crawford was anxious to receive him as his guest if he visited the north, he was not prepared to go further, and probably suggested that the Orangemen might render the experiment dangerous.*

* I infer that some such apprehension existed from the nature of a letter of this date among the "Cahirmoyle Correspondence": "I do not think there is the smallest danger of your mission to the north leading to any disturbance; but your going a few days before to Crawford's burn

The projected meeting took place in November. O'Brien, accompanied by a strong deputation, set out for the north with the generous hope of adding a new province to Irish Ireland. And he might have succeeded; for the Orangemen, who half a dozen years earlier had threatened the life of O'Connell for presuming to visit Belfast on a political mission, exhibited no unwillingness to hear the Confederates. An immense meeting received them; the platform was occupied by mercantile and professional men, half of them being Protestants or Presbyterians. But it was turned into a bear-garden by a gang of Old Irelanders—butchers from Hercules Street, for the most part—who clamoured to be let loose at the murderers of the Liberator. They interrupted the speakers with incessant bellowing—like the music of their own shambles, some one remarked—and forty or fifty of them, armed with cudgels, rushed at the platform, belabouring all whom they could reach. When the more conspicuous rioters were ejected, a vote of confidence in John O'Connell was moved, which O'Brien met with an amendment. The son of a noted Conservative, Mr. John Rea, a young attorney, with a strain of eccentric ability, supported the amendment passionately; and it was carried by an immense majority. But the meeting was spoiled. The deputation made a favourable impression in the north, and sowed seed which, unhappily, never got time

might be useful, if you could induce Mr. Crawford to join the Confederation as a Federalist. He and Mr. Monsell would be invaluable, both to the Confederation and for the purpose of bringing the gentry to see their duty as Irishmen."—*Duffy to O'Brien.*

to ripen. Conciliation Hall closed the business characteristically by thanking "the men of the north" for vindicating so well the principles of the Association. On their way to town the deputation held a successful meeting at Newry; but scarcely any success could compensate them for the spectacle of Repealers bringing disgrace on the national cause.

Though immersed in political projects, the young men did not altogether relinquish the special work for which they were fittest. We know now that almost the only deposit the strange fermentation of that era has left behind is their writings and speeches, and those of the school which they trained. They continued to foster the renaissance in literature and art by a hundred minute labours, and to irrigate the public mind with new currents of thought, during the reverses of the election campaign and the disasters of the famine. The Editor's Room was still the centre of a hundred converging projects, like a bureau where the lines of many telegraphs meet. But it was a characteristic trait of the party that they were partners, not competitors. Nobody occupied himself with any work which had a fair prospect of being done by his comrades: he turned to something else. John O'Hagan only made one speech at a public meeting; John Pigot never made even one; O'Gorman never wrote a leading article, Meagher not half-a-dozen in all; McCarthy was seldom seen at a committee, Mangan never; McManus neither wrote nor spoke, but patiently turned Agenda into Acta. Bindon, by birth one of the Protestant gentry of Munster, by profession a laborious barrister,

visited Belgium to search for traces of the immense Irish colonies settled there in the Penal times. This was his report to his friends :—

"I found at Louvain most, if not all, the Irish students and priests Young Irelanders; I have been sending them the *Nation* for the last six months now and again. Having collected them about me, I asked them did they know anything of their Irish predecessors; they all murmured No. It vexed me, and I reminded them of all they might know, and before we parted they were volunteering, like a band of brigands, to ransack the town for memorials, portraits, books, &c. I had the pleasure of handing the librarian of the magnificent library at Louvain a copy of the poems of Thomas Davis. I explained to him who he was, and my gift was so graciously received that I was invited to his private apartments, shown his private library, and finally was presented with a little work on Theology, edited by himself. I find that there is here one of the most striking oil paintings I ever saw—a portrait of Peter Lombard; I need not tell you that I will take home a copy of it. Materials for further notices of the Irish colleges are coming to my hand daily, and some of them are so interesting that I have determined not to write a line until I exhaust every source, then to arrange for our volume with wood-cuts, portraits, &c. I have copied a most interesting MS., the obits of the Franciscan College of Louvain; a document full of interesting particulars to Irish writers. What has given me most trouble is the discovery of the sites of the colleges; however, I have been successful at Douay, Tournay, Lille, and Antwerp; and St. Omers alone now gives me any difficulty."*

Another and more eminent and gifted barrister and man of letters, who was visiting England and the Continent at this time, wrote from Paris :—

* *Nation* Correspondence. Bindon to Duffy.

"The more I see of our neighbours, the better pleased I am with our poor people. I think we have the elements of an intellectual supremacy among us. Keep up Burton's heart, for we must make him and Hogan the nucleus of our school of art. Petrie we most cherish for grave and solid learning. What dolts they are in the University not to make him an honorary LL.D. I expect great things from Mitchel, for all his bloody buffers and locomotive smash. Give him my warm remembrances. James Duffy deserves to be shot for neglecting to push his books into an English circulation; and if I don't hear immediately from George Smith, I'll condemn him to the triangles. It is sheer want of push that keeps us back. Galignani must either be made to attend to us, or be made to feel the thorn of a rival establisment. It vexes me to the heart that I must go away without seeing anything done in this direction. Only think, the *University Magazine* not at Galignani's!"

McGee, who had been recently in England, brought home lessons on the minor morals of simplicity and steadfastness, which he considered his countrymen specially needed.

"I wish young Irishmen would work as hard to acquire the good business habits of Englishmen as they do to acquire their bad accent. Let them study an English merchant. He is a plain man, plainly attired. Every hour in the day, from morning till evening, you will find him in his warehouse. He is worth, say, half a million, perhaps; yet he dines at the ordinary, and treats the clerk who earns a hundred a year, and who sits next him, as politely as if he were a Baring or a Rothschild. You enter into discourse with him—he is not deficient in information or in manners. While his leisure lasts he will share it with you, when it is out he tells you he must go to business, and leaves you without further ceremony. What a contrast to our walking gentlemen! What a lesson to our idle

educated young men, who are choking the professions, and losing themselves in inaction! We have many things to learn from the English, but most especially their manner of conducting business. A thousand such Irishmen, with English training, as I met in my short tour, would, if transplanted here, do things for Ireland which the 80,000 Volunteers, if they arose again from the dead, could not accomplish."

Sometimes, though rarely, there appeared at our counsels a tall, spare, scholarly-looking priest, with pale face, deep-set grey eyes, and a smile that was commonly sarcastic. He was a man greatly, but unequally gifted. With more worldly wisdom he might have been a Swift; with more spirituality and fidelity he might, perhaps, have been a Savanarola. But there were deficiencies and eccentricities in his nature which marred his career, and in the end it was truer of himself than of O'Connell, against whom he uttered the epigram, that he was "a great man *manqué*." At this time he mooted a project which promised to be effective and useful. The imputation of holding infidel opinions had been successfully employed against the Young Irelanders and he thought it ought to be met in a public and formal manner. He prepared a memorial on behalf of the Catholic Confederates, reciting the charges which ecclesiastics of various degrees had published, and in which we had been grievously misrepresented, and proposed that we should send this document with a suitable deputation to the annual assembly of bishops in Dublin. It asked them to take our complaint into consideration, and, having heard any further explanation which might be considered necessary from the deputation, to make such

judgment in the premises as should seem expedient for the interest of truth, justice, country, and religion. It was signed by representative men only: leading merchants and manufacturers and professional men, some of whom were doctors at the head of their class in Munster, and barristers, two of whom have since become judges, and others who have won a notable success in various departments of life. Two priests and two laymen carried it to Marlborough Street Presbytery, where the bishops were assembled. They gave it to the Primate, Dr. Crolly, for submission to the Synod, a copy having been previously sent to the secretary that no one might be taken by surprise. After a delay of half-an-hour, during which the deputation constantly expected a summons, Dr. Derry, Bishop of Clonfert, brought back the document unopened. He told them, with feeling and sympathy as they believed, that the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Murray, was of opinion they ought to be heard in their own defence, and other prelates concurred with him, but the Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. McHale, declared that he would retire on the instant if the Young Irelanders were admitted. The deputation carried away their memorial, which had been nearly as ill received as the Remonstrance of the Dublin artizans in Conciliation Hall. Before separating, the bishops voted an address on the state of the country to the Lord-Lieutenant, which was graciously acknowledged. For a century and upwards the humble complaints and petitions of the Catholic bishops were either refused a hearing at the Castle, or could elicit no answer that

would recognise their existence; and it may be doubted whether the conduct of the Irish Executive was intrinsically more unjust or unreasonable than the refusal of which the Archbishop of Tuam was the mouthpiece. It is curious and wholesome to reflect that after a generation has lived and died those who were kept waiting at the door, in the person of their delegates, and could not obtain an audience, scarcely a civil refusal, count for as much in the confidence and love of their country as any or all of the eminent persons who closed the door in their face.*

The correspondents, whose friendly counsel from London was so genial and persuasive, were now in Ireland; but the office of censor to the *Nation* was not long vacant. Wallis seized the post. He had insight and judgment to be a poignant critic, but the loving sympathy, prompt to warn, but better pleased to praise and help than to censure, was wanting. And, what was worse, he had never the whole case before him; his predecessors had been kept informed of whatever the party did or designed, and what impediments they had to encounter, and could make allowance for difficulties; he only knew what the newspaper could disclose. But his letters were a wholesome tonic, even when his diagnosis was at fault:—

"You have a people at the lowest ebb of mental and bodily atrophy. You talk of raising that people to independence, pros-

* The project was not universally approved of. Meagher wrote:—"Will you be so good as to tell McGee that my letter about the 'Memorial' need not be published unless the 'Memorial' itself is published—I don't like the 'Memorial' at all—so, there's 'freedom of opinion for you!'"—*Nation* Correspondence. Meagher to Duffy.

perity, and power. You mean to do it. Ye are pledged to do it or die. And the whole of you don't take one-half the trouble to effect your purpose that would be requisite for the success of a mine or a factory. One copper-smelter, or iron-master, or cotton lord, except he meant to be ruined, would do more work in a week than the whole of your present Council do in a month. I wish the young Conservatives would begin to agitate, for I greatly mistake them, or there are men among them who would not so tamely acquiesce in a national movement that consists of mere gesticulation. . . . I have the highest opinion of the firmness and discretion which has been evinced in the disputes with Conciliation Hall from the beginning of the schism down to the last conference. And nothing could be more gratifying in every light than the variety both of ability and integrity which made itself visible in that struggle. But there my praise of your party ends, and in direct proportion to that must be my surprise and sorrow at the absolute nullity of all the other proceedings of the Confederation. . . . It is easy for you all to abuse O'Connell, and to point to the disastrous results of his system. But there is not one of you that is not incalculably more guilty than ever O'Connell was. He, poor man, acted up to the full extent of the powers and instincts that nature gave him. He grew up in a harum-scarum age; and in any case his passions were, perhaps, too strong to have permitted in him a healthy development of either wisdom or honesty. But you, ye Confederates, born in better times, heirs of his authority, rich in the experience he made for you, and warned by his errors and shortcomings, are you to be merely admonished by the weakness and vice that was in the man, and not stimulated by what were better worth your study, his greatness, and the energy with which he strove for such ends as he could comprehend? For if he flagged and vacillated in later years, it was, after all, more from want of a distinct aim than from any other cause. How the poor old dethroned Saturn would scorn you if he really knew what cloud compellers you are.* . . . But it is the old story, the perpetually re-

* Critics as competent as Wallis, but better informed in the premises,

curring cycle of amiable imbecility. Thus did Grattan and Flood forego the glorious opportunities God gave the country. 'Twas thus the United Irishmen dawdled and delayed, keeping the insurrection at half-cock till the priming dropped out. What a country! What a people! What a doom! The ways of God are inscrutable. Well! He has given you notice to quit, and I think—I was going to say, I think He's right; but that were rather presumptuous for a man to say of his Maker,—I think, then, God's meaning is very plain, legible to the meanest understanding. He says, 'Good Celts and quasi-Celts and demi-semi-quavering incarnations that ye are, of every species of cowardice but personal, you have had for 3,000 years the finest country and the finest position on this glorious planet of mine, and you have made nothing of them. The interests of humanity don't admit of that description of waste land and wasted opportunity any longer, and therefore you must quit. Saxons, French, Russians, or Yankees shall have the Green Land.'"

But it was his bile, not his brain or heart, which spoke. At bottom he was as unwilling to see the old race dispersed as any amongst us. He wrote soon after:—

"The accounts from Ireland are terribly discouraging, especially the tremendous emigration. It is an awful thing to see the best germs of national honesty and industry torn up wholesale thus. The wheat pulled up and the tares left! . . . I grudge the vile Yankees such an accession of pith and manhood as once out of their own country our exiles prove. I pine to see that most scoundrelly of existing races pampered with the marrow

were more indulgent. One writer, who in those days looked like the spirit of Irish liberty embodied in a stately and beautiful woman, recognised, with the eyes of a poet, the courage and persistence which were their best gifts:—

"Ah, the brave ones! Lion-hearted! They whose prophet accents rung,
As if Pentecostal fires had been kindled on their tongue:
Some with words of soft persuasion melting hearts of stern and strong,
Like the minor chord that waketh all our tears in Irish song."

of our isle. Do not forget what the testimony of all observers goes to prove, that the Irishman, as such, is little less hated and despised in Yankeeland than in England. How could it be otherwise in a country which prides itself upon its Anglo-Saxonism above everything else?"

He extended his superintendence to whatever we were doing, and in general found only occasion for censure:—

"If the press of Ireland is to be kept at that height to which you first succeeded in raising it, it is more incumbent on you than ever to keep the standard of your literary department as high as possible. Irishmen are too prone to content themselves with what is superficial and ephemeral. And it is to little purpose that you will have once set them the example of better, if you do not sedulously keep it up. Perhaps I fail to convey to you what I most miss in the *Nation*: I miss the perpetual direction of the curiosity of the country to everything that was going on. Formerly the perpetual cry was—look here, Irishmen, look there, here is something, there is something, vital to you to know, and of which you know nothing. History, biography, fine arts, everything, down to rules for marching, were treated in this way. Now, don't go and say this is a mere lament for Davis. There are many men writing for the *Nation* who have more talent than he had; and what he set the example of they could do if they chose. . . You have had lately several (rather meagre) papers on flax cultivation; but you do not appear to be aware of the fact, or at least you have not noticed it, that we are in danger of losing that source of wealth, both in its growth and after preparation. The pig trade, estimated at £2,000,000, is gone; if to this be added the flax trade and a large portion of the linen manufacture—value, say, from £5,000,000 to £10,000,000—what element of material prosperity will Ireland have left?"

In England we had no allies we could count upon,

except the better educated and better disposed of the democracy, and a few literary men who respected courage and sincerity, and applauded Young Ireland less because they thought it right, than because they were persuaded it was upright, in its opinions. The Chartist who listened to the egotistical declamation of Mr. Feargus O'Connor did not understand the party, and Mitchel excited their rage by a needless warning that we scorned their help, and intended to separate further and further from them :—

"We desire no fraternisation between the Irish people and the Chartists, not on account of the bugbear of physical force, but simply because some of their five points are to us an abomination, and the whole spirit and tone of their proceedings, though well enough for England, are so essentially English that their adoption in Ireland would neither be probable nor at all desirable. Between us and them there is a gulf fixed, and we desire, not to bridge it over, but to make it wider and deeper."*

But the men of thought and culture among the democracy made allowance for the casualties of journalism, and continued to exhibit goodwill in their writings and correspondence.† The Young Englanders,

* *Nation*, August 15, 1847.

† There were brains and ideas devoted to Chartism by men who had nothing in common with Feargus O'Connor. Mr. Linton, the artist and engraver, for example, was originally a Chartist. I found in the blurred pages of some unstamped publication a ballad of his which made me anxious to make his acquaintance, and which, after nearly forty years, still clings to my memory as a fine specimen of vigorous and picturesque ballad rhetoric. This was a verse :—

"Up ! up ! ye English peasantry for whom Wat Tyler bled ;
Up, cityed serfs, whose sturdy sires Cade and Ardchamber led ;
Up, up, for equal rights and laws, your cause is all as good
As when in presence of the smith a traitor monarch stood !
Up, up, if ye be Englishmen ; be mindful of the day
When Cromwell strode o'er Worcester field, and scared a King away.
Though Ket, and Cade, and Tyler failed, the 'Crowning Mercy' came
Hurrah for England's stalwart one ! your fortune be the same."

who also had something in common with young men contending for their opinions against authority and prestige, felt a certain sympathy and interest in the Confederates—not likely, indeed, to result in action of any sort, but which makes, nevertheless, part of the working capital and the equipment of a party.* There was something touching and almost tragic in the sympathy which came from another class in England—the men of letters of our own blood and race. Few of them shared our opinions; some were quite hostile to them when put in action; but these men of whom their country knew nothing, or only enough to misunderstand them, could not escape the mesmerism of the Irish cause. The *Morning Chronicle*, which commonly treated the Confederates with courtesy and respect, had a coarse and sinister attack upon them; and the Irish journalists in London were more discomposed than the men assailed.

"I know nothing whatever about the *Morning Chronicle*," Daniel Owen Maddyn wrote, "and am far from being friendly with the Irish who are on that paper. They are the greatest sneerers at their country of all the Irish renegadoes. I would

The lines in italics seem to me singularly picturesque. Mr. Linton became an occasional contributor to the *Nation*, and was only one of a considerable section of the thoughtful and cultivated English democracy who sympathise with it.

* A young English member, who has since won a notable place in public life, made a tour in Ireland this year, and bears significant testimony of the growth of this sentiment Speaking of the Young Irelanders he says:—"But the energy, intellect, and genius of repealing Ireland is with them; and I see no reason why the corresponding section of anti-repeal Ireland, a section every day coming more prominently into notice, should not, in the progress of events, be found acting with them just as often as against them.—"Notes of an Irish Tour," by Lord John Manners, M.P.

sooner be stabbed than be spat upon. I prefer the dare-devil audacity of the avowed Irish buccaneers who are on the London press to the sneaking, scoffing, and puling Anglicism of the counterfeit English. Although I differ from the extreme lengths to which your Irish war party appears to be going, on the subject of Irishism I am as hot as * * * * . . . Lalor is too sedate by half—his enthusiasm is too finely intellectual, and he is deficient in convictions. He would make you always doubt your own views without in the slightest degree helping you to a new formation of a synthesis. He has an admirable talent for indicating difficulties, and is a thorough Englishman. . . . He is a wretched hand at soothing a wounded spirit; there is too much of brains in his heart to give me the sympathy I like.. He is a man, however, that I hold in very great respect." *

Wallis, who was writing articles on Foreign Policy in the *Chronicle*, which the *Constitutionnel* and *Journal des Débats* commonly treated as the work of a Minister, sent explanations and assurances on the same subject:—

"Such an article is directly in the teeth of what I had always been given to understand were the wishes of the editors, and I can only account for its appearance by some neglect or mistake during Lalor's absence at Brighton. [Mr. John Lalor at that time usually wrote the Irish articles in the *Chronicle*.] It is in justice to Lalor that I mention this. For my own part, I presume that those who know me will acquit me of giving the most remote or indirect sanction to an attack on a party to which I consider myself to belong, and with whom, if I were in a position to do so, I would cordially act. If my connection with the *Chronicle* were to continue, I should count the appearance of that article a gross breach of faith with me, though it was not my intention ever to have written on or interfered with the treatment of Irish subjects." †

* *Nation* Correspondence: Maddyn to Duffy.

† Mr. Lalor, better remembered as the author of "Money and Morals"

One man of genius who habitually held away from politics—Clarence Mangan—was so disturbed by the condition of the country that he asked me to propose him a member of the Confederation that he might share its labours and dangers. But I strongly dissuaded him from taking this step. His only fixed income was derived from work done for the Library of Trinity College, and from his contributions to the *University Magazine* and *Nation*, which were becoming more and more irregular and erratic. I did not doubt that the College authorities would withdraw the work if he became an avowed Confederate; and, unfortunately, he furnished them with a plausible excuse apart from politics; for, in his own touching language, he approached painfully near to the "gulf abysmal of Maginn and Burns." I knew and loved him from the time when I was not yet a man, and I spared no pains to recall him to his better self. He consented to restrict his politics to the field for which Nature had peculiarly endowed him, to amend what was amiss in his habits; and to what was called the "pledge" in those days added another and a nobler pledge—to devote the remainder of his life to the service of his country:—

than by his journalism, and who was a man to respect and love, sent assurances later that he was not the writer of the article, and would not have so written:—"It has been published during my absence from town, and has given me, I am sure, more annoyance than it can possibly give any one else. I yield to the impulse to say this much to you. . . . I do not, I confess, see wisdom or practicability in the views of your friends, but nothing could induce me to speak or write of them except with the respect which is due to their ability and to the nobleness of their intentions. There is no class of politicians with whom, as far as mere feeling goes, my sympathies are so strong. Their passionate and inspiring faith makes me wish I could believe in the same creed."

"Lastly, I promise, in an especial manner—and my friend Duffy may, if he will, make the promise public—that I will begin in earnest to labour for my country henceforward, and that, come weal or woe, life or death, glory or shame, the triumphal chariot or the gallows, I will adhere to the fortunes of my fellow-patriots. And I invoke the vengeance of hell upon me if I ever prove false to this promise! . . May God bless him! He has been to me, as Godwin remarked of Curran, the sincerest friend I have ever had."

His letters were sometimes grave and practical, but oftener ran into a vein of mysticism, or degenerated into the mere verbal pleasantry of puns and quibbles:—

"Badgered, as I take it for granted you are at the present moment, I should be the greatest rascal on the face of the earth if I either requested or expected you to devote a single thought to my concerns. Don't mind the Griffin affair. I assure you I would not have spoken as I did speak last Friday if I had been aware that this case impended so imminently.* . . What I sent you lastly was vastly ghastly. I hope the enclosed will be more to your taste. Alter any word in it you like, or, rather, any word you don't like."

It was proposed to include a volume of his translations in the "Library of Ireland" under the title of "Echoes of Foreign Song," but the publisher advised that the series should be closed, as the poverty and anxiety of the country diminished, and threatened to destroy, the sale.

"The 'Echoes,' of course, as you observe, must wait for the Irish translations. We will find a better name for them, an 't please Adam, who, like a man of good taste as he was, gave the

* The prosecution for the railway article.

best names to all things. . . I had a singular dream a few nights back. There was a light and a throng—not the 'lurid light and trampling throng' of Coleridge, yet quite as impressive. In other words, a monster moon shone in the firmament, and a crowd of people were beneath, with whom I held, as I suppose, a long conference. I say, 'as I suppose,' for all that I distinctly remember was that, turning away from them, I found myself on the verge of a precipice, with these words of St. John in my mouth—'And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?'" *

Wallis's handwriting resembled Coleridge's—that is to say, it was pleasanter to read than many a printed book; and though he performed the office of censor with prodigious industry, I rarely thought there was too much of him. A few more samples will help to illustrate the era as well as the man:—

"By the way, you have omitted to notice that the famous doctrinaire and Whig De Tocqueville has published rather a clever Hallam-like history of the reign of Louis XV. You will find a notice of it in *Blackwood* of this month, wherein De T.'s account of the battle of Fontenoy is extracted, *sans* mention of the Irish Brigade! This was all very well in Voltaire's time, though Voltaire got heavily chastised for it. But in De Tocqueville it cannot be ignorance, and can be only wanton insolence

* Another specimen of the dreary, verbal pleasantry in which Mangan, like Swift, found enjoyment, is worth preserving as the nonsense of a man of genius:—"I owed you no ode—no one ode! No one owed you an ode—any one ode! No one knowed that any one owed you any one ode; or, if any one knowed that any one owed you any one ode, I am not that one—o-de-ar, not I! I look on odes as ode-ious compositions—adulatory stuff, flattery of the flattest sort; worthy to be paid for, not in the glorious renown which all honest, honourable, high-souled, and high-heeled men seek, but out of the purse—one-pound-one a line, not a camac less! Now, you know I spit upon this sort of thing—I never take money for what I write. It is always given me, pressed on me, sent to me, flung in my phiz—and I, for sake of a quiet life, pocket the affront!"

and contempt for Ireland. I think the *Nation* ought to impale De Tocqueville for the said piece of scoundrelism. But get the original work for fear *Blackwood* garbled. Bindon is the man that has the materials by him, but it would require a more effective writer to thrash De T. with full effect. Indeed, I think De T. ought to get a bodily licking likewise with the stick which Bindon cut at Fontenoy. . .. I had almost forgotten—were you aware that Minerva has married Apollo—to wit, Elizabeth Seraphim to Robert Paracelsus? Was there ever since Cadmus invented letters such a literary union? The pair of super-subtle metaphysical millstones will grind one another to pieces."

Devin Reilly moved his special wrath by a careless and somewhat presumptuous habit of generalising from materials which he had not adequately mastered. This complaint he discharged in a letter to Pigot:—

"Count O'Reilly has unmistakably turned up again in the review of 'Ireland Sixty Years Ago.' Contemptuous as the Count is of accuracy in sublunary matters, I think he ought, for the sake of his Peninsula name-sake, 'who did not take Algiers,' to play ducks and drakes less remorselessly with the Castilian tongue. . He talks of the dames of German and Austrian princes, 'the dark-eyed Camarillas of Spain, and the Messalinas of Russia.' The Condé appears to take Camarilla either for a christian name or for some pagan appellation of ladies of the Semiramis and Messalina breed. Whereas it simply means a 'closet,' and thus became applied to that petti-coat influence which, intriguing behind the scenes, has so often overthrown the Spanish Ministries. These ladies of the Queen's bed-chamber had doubtless the majority of them dark eyes; but blue eyes are not uncommon in Spain, and it would be rather a catachresis (or whatever the figure of rhetoric may be) to call a closet or drawing-room dark-eyed because there were now and then dark-eyed dames there congregated. The Condé's own

sleeping-place might as well be called a foolish ignorant bed-chamber because a foolish ignorant person slept in it. Why, a man might as well talk of a bottle-nosed dining parlour, or a rosy-cheeked boudoir, as of a 'dark-eyed Camarilla!' I fancy the Senor Condé confounded Camarilla with Catalina (or Catharine), a name which 'Gil Blas' and other books have made familiar as belonging to Spanish courtezans. It would be a Herculean task to chronicle the Count's assaults on dates and facts; but I may remark that Quesnay (not, I fancy, Du Quesnay) was thinker (*quere* tinker?) to Louis XV., and not to Louis XIV. He was a cotemporary of Adam Smith's, and not, as Reilly would make it appear, two generations his senior. Turgot and the elder Mirabeau were, with Smith, his principal disciples. This mistake is the less excusable, because Quesnay figures pretty prominently in the memoirs of the time, which I dare say the Condé has pretty extensively skipped. But what is to be said of or to a man who places Swift's death in 1754?—not a misprint the context showed—or who took upon him to assert that in 1830 O'Connell had the confidence of no English party, and was isolated in the House of Commons? But this was not the most comic and outrageous scene in that 'Comedy of Errors,' which Reilly is permitted to exhibit in the *Nation*, and which will end by earning for that paper the scorn of every educated man. It is a pity that Duffy, who is so precise and punctilious with other men, and so unrestrained, in Answers to Correspondents and elsewhere, in administering to them the discipline he thinks they require, should be so lax with respect to Reilly, in the three departments of grammar, rhetoric, and facts. He certainly does not act towards Reilly the part of a true friend. 'The young man really has talents, ideas, and I would say information, if it were not topsy-turvied. It is deplorable that he should be allowed to run to seed for want of a rap on the knuckles now and then."

Reilly's culpable carelessness sprang in part from discontent. He had not been successful in the Con-

federation to the extent of his ambition, or even of his powers, for he was vain and impatient of discipline, and O'Brien and other seniors could scarcely tolerate him. He cherished a fierce jealousy of McGee, whom he believed to be more favoured. They were the youngest members of the party; I liked both of them cordially, but I found a larger range of powers and a more genial and susceptible nature in McGee. I had known Reilly from boyhood, and as I was seven years his senior he regarded me, I do not doubt, with inordinate sentiments of esteem. In the correspondence of the period he speaks of me as "the friend he most valued in the world;" one "whose friendship he would not barter for a crown," and so forth. But he considered that his rival was unduly preferred to him, and he avenged his wrong like a boy by quarrelling with McGee and neglecting his own duty. Once or twice I made peace between them, but the sore was not healed. His volume for the "Library of Ireland" was not forthcoming at the appointed time, and his contributions to the paper were not satisfactory. I remonstrated, and he defended himself by declaring that he had lost heart, his opinions had no weight in the Confederation, and in the *Nation* he was restricted to the literary pages, instead of being allowed to write on questions of the day :—

"I am powerless in the Council. I have neither the manner, nor the tact, nor the power of speech to change or sway a man on it. But I am ready and willing to work like a horse there in the lowest sphere, if I could only see men above me up to their

position, and equal to the time. . . . The first of the fortnightly meetings was held: I personally endeavoured to carry out what I intended, and you know how ridiculous was my failure. That and other matters weighing on my mind induced an attack of illness of which we shall say no more." *

But while he proclaimed his own shortcomings, he insisted that the men who led the Council—especially O'Brien, and probably McGee, who by this time was Secretary—were not competent to lead and had committed serious mistakes:—

"It could not be otherwise, it cannot be otherwise, until the real and true leaders of our whole movement, the only men capable of leading, you and Mitchel, go there and lead again."

He felt the same disinclination to accept McGee's lead in the Council as in the newspaper:—

"If I am not now, or shall not at any future time, be capable of holding my position under you and Mitchel, I beg as a personal favour you will tell me so at once, for I shall never hold a lower one."

The contentions which sprung from this antipathy became so disagreeable that Pigot proposed a self-denying ordinance. He suggested that the younger members of the Council, McGee, Reilly, Smythe, and himself should retire together, and Meagher offered to take the same course as a lesser evil than continued discord between two prominent members.† But peace was temporarily restored without this extreme measure.

* *Nation* Correspondence. Reilly to Duffy.

† Cahirmoyle Correspondence, April 29th, '47. Pigot did not undervalue the sacrifice he was willing to make; in the letter to O'Brien pro-

The difficulties of harmonising political dissent, when it attempts to become political action, was curiously illustrated by an incident which distracted our counsels at this time. The officers commanding the ships of war which carried the gift of America to Ireland were entertained at a banquet in Dublin, and the Confederation voted its thanks to Mr. Dallas, the Vice-President of the United States, for his share in the transaction. Mr. Dallas was a slave-owner, and Mr. Haughton opposed the proposal of thanking a slave-owner under any circumstances or for any service. It was vain to assure him that Mr. Dallas's slave-owning concerned us no more than his being a churchwarden; that we thanked him because he did us a service which deserved thanks. Mr. Haughton was a sensible and honest man, but he was fanatical on this subject, and as his objection did not prevail he retired from the association.

At a later period, Wallis returned to the subject of our shortcomings.

"The *Nation* is the only journal, political or literary, that commands the entire confidence of the people. And is it not a grievous sin, a gross betrayal of that most touching of all trusts, a spontaneous one, if week after week, when the still growing, ever-expanding mind of the rising generation turns to your pages for guidance, it finds so little solid wholesome food—at best but bootless variations on themes already familiar to it? Much of the early writing in the *Nation* was hasty; perhaps even crude. But, however carelessly written, its tendency was always to lift

posing it, he said: "Meantime, let me remind you that before Duffy or Mitchel, or Meagher, before yourself, even before Thomas Davis had come over to the opinions now called of Young Ireland, I had begun to work in my own way to gain others to that side. Nationality has been to me from childhood a sacred religion."

the Irish mind to a higher platform, to teach it to look about it. Not Davis's articles and your own only, but most of those by other hands, had this merit. They were invariably stimulative and suggestive. How many literary articles have you yourself written within the last year? Surely much fewer than, with your powers of impressive and suggestive writing, you are called upon to supply, no matter how active your best contributors may be. . . Remember you don't and won't write books. If you did and would—for that, in my opinion, you are best of all suited for—I should not press you to sacrifice that employment to any other." *

Among new contributors who offered themselves at this time, two deserve to be noticed. One bore an historic name, familiar not only in Ireland but throughout Europe.† The other afterwards, and speedily, won himself a recognised place in Irish affairs. Joseph Brenan, then a student at Cork, and barely on the threshold of manhood, sent me some of his verses, and asked, ought he to continue to cultivate poetry. The verses were, like nearly all boyish rhymes, echoes of a favourite writer; and I replied that his prose was much better, and that it would be a wise economy of his powers to irrigate it with the fancy with which nature had gifted him.

* The decreasing attention given to mere literary subjects will be understood by an "Answer to Correspondents" in the *Nation* at this time: —"T. C. D." asks news of the 'Ballad History of Ireland,' projected and commenced in the *Nation* last year. Ballad balderdash! Does he see no difference between last year and this? What man with a heart would sit down to write Ballad History while his country perishes? There are great lessons in our history and great triumphs, and we delighted once, and may again, to dwell upon them; but we would rather hear of a great league of Irishmen of all creeds, confederated together in 1847, to give Ireland to the Irish, than all the victories since King Dathy."

† "Though I do not agree with you in politics," he said, "I admire and value your definite truthfulness and consistent advocacy, and would gladly do anything in my power to assist, either in prose or verse, the literary department of your journal."

"I return you most sincere thanks for your kind note, which is to me invaluable. The advice contained in it about verse-shunning will be carefully followed. Any verses I have ever written were intended entirely as experiments, and your opinion of their merits has only confirmed my own. Henceforward, Verse and I are strangers. The parting is not very pathetic, as she has always despised my advances, and I have cursed the difficulty of getting into her good graces. You express a fear that your criticism may not be welcome; but truly, if it were as severe as it is lenient, the flattering expressions which accompanied it would more than countervail the severity. A word of praise from you is worth striving for, and the greatest inducement that I can have to 'active work' is the fact of my humble efforts having met with your approval."

But he did not give up versifying; he came, indeed, to write very pretty madrigals in the end, and was probably as thankful to me for my counsel as Byron was to Brougham for failing to foresee "Childe Harold" in the "Hours of Idleness."

The purpose which ran through all these projects and speculations was to kindle the educated class, without whom no successful revolution has ever been accomplished, and to mass them on the side of the people. It is the more necessary to note this aim, because the time was at hand when we were exhorted to abandon all we had done from the beginning, to break with the only serviceable allies we had won, and to stake the Irish cause on the valour of famishing peasants.*

* To worship the Whigs was the tendency of the professional world, and to mock the worship the sport of the patriots. Visiting a young barrister, who felt a lively contempt for the obsequiousness of the junior Bar, I was amused to find a black bust of one of the Roman emperors, with a cordon of red tape round its neck, to which was attached a ticket labelled "Mr. Labouchere!" Mr. Labouchere was the new Secretary for Ireland.

NOTE ON CHAPTER IV.

WALLIS AND DAVIS.

SOME of Wallis's letters in 1842, as editor of the *Citizen*, to Davis, a chief contributor, are as edifying as Jeffrey's letters to Carlyle, in a similar relation:—

"You have (I presume from the books you have been reading) adopted the vile, blackguard, beastly, blundering, bullish mode of spelling the Eastern proper names; and this I could not possibly consent to be conceived to sanction, though it will be some trouble to revise the orthography, which, with your permission, I will do, if you have not time to do it yourself. It was especially to explain my objections and proposed mode of reformation that I wished to see you. But you will easily judge what I most object to. My aim would be that the letters in the Anglo-brutish, which unfortunately we cannot altogether discard, should at least represent cognate characters in the travestied cognomina. I would therefore substitute 'i' for 'ee,' 'u' for 'oo,' 'a' for 'au,' &c., &c. The Anglo-brutish mode does not represent the sounds at all, they being somewhat delicater than their bacon-bolting gullets could compass. Why should Pushtu or Industani be worse treated than French or German? Who would venture to write Pawree, Leeonhh, Cong, or Mooneek, instead of the legitimate orthographs of such ill-resembling cac-euphonies?—though not so bad as the Eastern manglings."

And later, on the same subject:—

"In your article this month I have struck out a couple of notes which showed better feeling than discretion, as they indicated rather too distinctly the animus with which the article was written, and were, in short, in the nature of winks from an actor or advocate to his audience: a thing to be avoided. I have also inserted a note on the pronunciation of the proper names, partly from conjecture of what a rational people with a good ear must prefer, rather than from actual knowledge. For I cannot believe that any people, with soul or ear, would put themselves to the pain, and their lips to the distortion, of saying 'ooloos,' &c., though 'ûlûs,' &c., be facile enough. The long sounds are, I believe, tolerably represented in the article as printed; but not, I apprehend, the short ones .... If you waver on the subject, just think of the barbarizations of our beautiful Irish names; aye, and even of the unbeautiful! To take two commonplace examples, think of the difference between O'Dowd and O'Duda, between the Suck and Suca, even in the spelling, to say nothing of the pronunciation; or, jumping to the antipodes, bethink thee, in this as in other things, of the fate of the Sandwich and Friendly Islanders—those soft, spontaneous, sweet-souled races, with all the grace and delicate organisation of the Greeks; wanting, alas! their energy—the Correggio of the nations! And their language, all vowels, a natural pandean of soul-warbling flutes—how have the brutish swine who trampled these angelic antelopes in the mire—how have they sought in grunts to emulate the spheral harmonies! So you have been lauding Brutus! So poor an object for apotheosis I know not in the wilderness of the past as that same stunted stoic."

CHAPTER V.

A NEW TRIBUNE, A NEW POLICY, AND A NEW SECESSION.

It becomes necessary to speak of a remarkable man not hitherto named—up to that time, indeed, completely unknown—who was destined to become, and long remain, a motive-power in Irish affairs.

The passive resistance to tithe which sprung up at the period of the first Repeal movement, and spread over two provinces with the irresistible sweep of a conflagration, originated with a gentleman farmer of the Queen's County, named Lalor. He was afterwards elected to Parliament by his neighbours; but when the Repeal movement was abandoned, and the tithe question compromised, he retired into private life, not too well pleased with either result. Mr. Lalor was gifted with no showy qualities; but he had decision of character, and intense sympathy with the people; and Pat Lalor, of Tinakill, was still a popular name, though it was rarely heard in public assemblies. Mr. Lalor's home was crowded with vigorous sons, fit for all the sports and labours of country life. But the eldest was a painful exception: he was deaf, near-sighted, ungainly, and deformed; and his deficiencies cut him off not only from any career needing sympathy and publicity, but even from social intercourse except with his nearest kin.

But nature is rich in compensations: he was trained by solitary meditation to a concentration and savage earnestness which often distinguish men to whom the ordinary channels of communication are closed; and he was endowed with a will and a persuasiveness of prodigious force. Of all the men who have preached revolutionary politics in Ireland, this isolated thinker, who had hitherto had no experience either as a writer or an actor in public affairs, was the most original and intense. His imagination was so vivid that his desires framed themselves like palpable images in his mind, and he lived in a world of dreams far more real to him than the world that lay about him on an Irish farm. He projected, as solitary thinkers are apt to do, in the unfenced field of fancy, and his schemes seemed so logically exact and demonstrable that he could discern no difficulties which forbade their immediate execution. But when he tried to put them into action, they tripped over impediments of which he had taken no account. Having never known the invaluable discipline of rivals and competitors to reduce his plans to practical dimensions, he nourished an indomitable intellectual pride in his work, which was probably aggravated by the necessity a deformed man feels to insist upon his individuality. Had he been six feet high, had his sane and vigorous intellect been lodged in a sane and vigorous body, had his *amour-propre*, which was irritated by opposition and unreasonable contempt, been soothed by sympathy and success, he might have rivalled Tone or Owen O'Neill. But his fate, as we shall see, was widely different. When

the Confederation was about to be founded, he sent me a letter which amazed me by its freshness and force, all the more that I had never heard him named up to that hour. He declared that he could neither be ally nor well-wisher of a movement which confined itself to simple Repeal as an end, or to moral force as a means, or which even limited itself to national independence, if national independence did not include the repeal of the confiscation which gave the soil of the country to strangers and enemies. This letter was in the end the root of so many unexpected changes that it is necessary to present it to the reader unabridged *:—

"SIR,—I am one of those who never joined the Repeal Association or the Repeal movement—one of Mr. O'Connell's 'creeping, crawling, cowardly creatures' — though I was a Repealer in private feeling at one time, for I hardly know that I can say I am one now, having almost taken a hatred and disgust to this my own country and countrymen. I did not join the agitation, because I saw—not from reflection, but from natural instinct, the same instinct that makes one shrink from eating carrion—that the leaders and their measures, means and proceedings, were, intrinsically and essentially, vile and base; and such as never either could or ought to succeed. Before I embarked in the boat, I looked at the crew and the commander; the same boat which you and others mistook in '43 for a *war-frigate* because she hoisted gaudy colours, and that her captain 'swore terribly;' *I* knew her at once for a leaky collier-smack, with a craven crew to man her, and a sworn dastard and forsworn traitor at the helm—a fact which you and Young Ireland would seem never to have discovered until he ordered the boat to be stranded, and yourselves set ashore.

* Dated Tinakill, Abbeyleix, Monday, Jan. 11, 1847.

"I would fain become one of the 'National' party, if they could consent to act along with me and I with them. But I confess I have my many doubts—I have had them all along; and they have been terribly strengthened by the two last numbers of the *Nation*. I mean those of Dec. 26 and Jan. 2: the last (Jan. 9) I have not yet seen. It is not figure, but fact, that reading those two numbers made me *ill*. I have long been intending to write to you to resolve those doubts, and have only been prevented by sickness. I must now defer doing so for some little time longer; and my reason for writing the present hurried note is this: It has just occurred to me that, at the meeting on Wednesday, an Association may possibly be formed on such a basis, and resolutions or pledges adopted of such a character, as would exclude and excommunicate me, and many beside. These resolutions or pledges may relate either—1st, to the end; 2nd, to the means. Now remark—1st. As to the end:—Should the end be defined strictly, in terms or effect, to the Repeal—simple Repeal, and nothing but or *besides* Repeal—I would thereby be excluded. For, in the first place, I will never contribute one shilling, or give my name, heart, or hand, for such an object as the simple Repeal by the British Parliament of the Act of Union. I shall state my reasons hereafter, not having time now. Don't define the object, nor give it such a name as would define it. Call it by some general name—independence, if you will. And, secondly, I never will act with nor aid any organisation limiting itself strictly to the *sole* object of dissolving the present connection with Britain and rigidly excluding every other. I will not be fettered and handcuffed. A mightier question is in the land—one beside which Repeal dwarfs down into a petty parish question; one on which Ireland may not alone try her own right, but try the right of the world; on which she would be, not merely an asserter of old principles, often asserted, and better asserted before her, an humble and feeble imitator and follower of other countries—but an original inventor, propounder and propagandist, in the van of the earth, and heading the nations; on which her success or her failure

alike, would never be forgotten by man, but would make her, forever, the lode-star of history; on which Ulster would be not 'on her flank,' but at her side; and on which, better and best of all, she need not plead, in humble petitions, her beggarly wrongs and how beggarly she bore them, nor plead any right save the right of her MIGHT.

"And if the magnitude and magnificence of that other question be not apparent and recognised—any more than the fact that on its settlement now depends the existence of an old and not utterly worthless people—it is partly, indeed, because the mass of mankind see all such questions, at first, through a diminishing glass, and every question is little until some one man makes it great; but partly, also, because the agitation of the Repeal question has been made to act as a proscription of every other. Repeal may perish, with all who support it, sooner than I will consent to be fettered on this question; or to connect myself with any organised body that would ban or merge, in favour of Repeal or any other measure, that greatest of all our rights on this side of heaven—God's grant to Adam and his poor children for ever, when He sent them from Eden in His wrath, and bid them go work for their bread. Why should I name it? 'National independence,' then, in what form of words you please; but denounce nothing—proscribe nothing—surrender nothing, more especially of your own freedom of action. Leave yourselves free individually and collectively. 2nd. As to the means:—If any resolution or pledge be adopted to seek legislative independence by moral force and legal proceedings alone; with a denunciation or renunciation of all or any other means or proceedings, you may have millions of stronger and better men than I to join you; but you wont have me. Such pledge, I am convinced, is not necessary to legalise any association. To illegalise there must, I conceive, be positive evidence of act or intention—deeds done or words spoken. Omitting to do anything can surely form no foundation for a legal charge. What! Is silence a proof of criminal intention? I speak, of course, in ignorance—being no lawyer, thank God! But whether I be

correct or not, I never will subscribe or assent to any such pledge or resolution. As regards the use of none but legal means, any means and all means might be made illegal by Act of Parliament; and such pledge, therefore, is passive obedience. As to the pledge of abstaining from the use of any but moral force, I am quite willing to take such pledge, if and provided, the English Government agree to take it also; but 'if not, not.' Let England pledge not to argue the question by the prison, the convict-ship, or the halter; and I will readily pledge not to argue it in any form of physical logic. But dogs tied and stones loose is no bargain. Let the stones be given up; or unmuzzle the wolf-dog. There is one at this moment in every cabin throughout the land, nearly fit already to be untied—and he will be savager by-and-by. For Repeal, indeed, he will never bite, but only bay; but there is *another* matter to settle between us and England. There has already, I think, been too much giving in on this question of means and force. Merely to save or assert the abstract right, for the use of other nations or other times, wont do for me. We must save it for our own use, and assert it too, if need be, and occasion offer. You will receive, and I hope read, this on to-morrow morning, before the Committee meet. My petition to you is that you will use your influence to prevent any of those resolutions from being adopted which would cut me off from co-operating with the new Association, should one be founded. Don't mention my name. It is one not worth half-a-farthing; but such as it is, I don't choose to give it to the Seceders until I have some better guarantee than I possess as yet that their new organisation will be anything better, stronger, or nobler than a decently conducted Conciliation Hall, free from its open and brazen profession of meanness, falsehood, cowardice, and corruption, but essentially just as feeble, inefficient, and ridiculous.

"Is there any apology required for addressing you in this manner? I don't know. Perhaps I have no right—though I have been a Seceder since I ceased to be a child. I owe to you some gratitude. *You have given me a country.* Before your time I

was an alien and exile, though living in my own land. I hope you wont make me one again.

"This letter has been hastily written; and I have not acquired the faculty of expressing what I wish with clearness or facility. Still I hope you will understand, or at least that you will not *mis*understand, me. The *Nation* of last Saturday might possibly give me information which would render my writing plainly unnecessary; but I don't receive it until Wednesday, being in partnership with another person.*

"I remain, your obedient servant,

"JAMES F. LALOR.

"To Charles Gavan Duffy."

This new tribune of the people was plainly entitled to a patient hearing. I invited him to state his opinions in the *Nation*, instead of committing them to my private ear; and he wrote three letters in quick succession, which were marvels of passionate, persuasive rhetoric. The first was addressed to the landowners of Ireland. He did not invite them to make a new Eighty-two, but to do their duty to the country which endowed them so bountifully. An era like that which preceded the first French Revolution had begun in Ireland, more destructive of life, more wasteful of property. Would it drag her down to ruin, or give her, as it had given France, victory, prosperity, and a free people, lords of their own land? A dissolution of the social system had taken place. The failure of the potato was the immediate exciting cause; into the predisposing causes it was need-

* As far as I am able to judge, the articles of which he complains were—one entitled "The Landlords" (Dec. 26), and one entitled "The Resident Landlords of Ireland" (Jan. 2)—exhorting the gentry to make another Eighty-two. They were both written by Mitchel, and expressed his views at that time with clearness and force.

less for the present to inquire. But there was no outrise or revolt against it. It was not broken up by violence. It was borne for ages in beggarly patience, until it perished by the visitation of God, in the order of nature. A clear, original right returned and reverted to the people—the right of establishing and entering into a new social arrangement.

The power of framing this new social order was in the hands of the class whom he addressed, if they chose to use it: on one condition, that they became what they professed to be—a national aristocracy. He bade them remember

"That Ireland is your mother-country, and her people your people; that her interest and honour, her gain and her glory, are counted as your own; that her rights and liberties you will defend as part of your inheritance; that in peace you will lead her progress, and carry her banner in battle; that your labour shall be in her service, and your lives laid down at her need; that henceforth you will be not a foreign garrison, but a national guard. This you must declare and adopt as the principle of your proceeding, and the spirit of your action, and the rule of your order; for these are the duties of nobility. Adopt this principle, and you are armed; on it is your safety and your strength. The future is fettered at your feet, and your name and race shall flourish and not fail. Ireland is yours for ages yet, on the condition that you will be Irishmen—in name, in faith, in fact. Refuse it, and you commit yourselves, in the position of paupers, to the mercy of English ministers and English members; you throw your very existence on English support, which England soon may find too costly to afford; you lie at the feet of events; you lie in the way of a people; and the movement of events and the march of a people shall be over you."

If they desired that the people should join hands

with them it must be on terms of mutual advantage—on terms that the rights of the people were as frankly acknowledged as their own rights.

To those who seized the opportunity of the famine to clear and consolidate farms, he uttered a warning more significant because it was stated moderately, and by inuendo.

"And so, it seems, *you* have doomed a people to extinction? And decreed to abolish Ireland? The undertaking is a large one: Are you sure your strength will bear you through it? Or are you sure your strength will not be tested? The settlement you have made requires nothing to give it efficacy, except the assent or acquiescence of eight millions of people. Will they assent or acquiesce? Will Ireland at last perish like a lamb, and let her blood sink in the ground, or will she turn as turns the baited lion? . . Your path of safety as well as of honour is now the public highway. No bye-way of your own will carry you through the perils that beset, and the greater perils that are before you." *

These opinions made an intense impression on some of the Confederates, especially on Mitchel, Doheny, and Reilly. Mitchel directed O'Brien's attention to them, and declared that the Irish landlords might still become the most powerful aristocracy in the world if they would take to heart Lalor's proposal.† Reilly, to whom adven-

* "There were several misprints in my letter; for instance, I am made to declare myself an anti-Repealer! But all these misprints were more than compensated for by the Christian charity of putting 'A New Nation' as the heading; which rendered an essential service to the letter."—*Nation* Correspondence. Lalor to Duffy.

† "I wish you would read carefully the paper signed 'J. F. Lalor' in to-day's *Nation*. I do believe the landed proprietors if they would even now, or any considerable number of them, take to heart that proposal, could make fair and honourable terms for themselves, and become the most

turous theories were welcome, rivalled or echoed them in one of his few speeches to the Confederation. And Doheny, who lived at no great distance, had an interview with the new tribune, and reported the result:—"I could not be persuaded," he wrote, "that I had before me, in the poor, distorted, ill-favoured, hunch-backed little creature, the bold propounder of the singular doctrines in the *Nation* letters." *

Lalor's letters were written after the meeting of Irish proprietors out of which sprang the Irish Council. He insisted that the Council ought to consist exclusively of landlords, and that a Tenant League ought to be established in each county, and a Traders' Society in each considerable town, which, together with the Council, might constitute a National Convention. Nothing could be more logical or plausible, and nothing was more utterly impracticable. The landlords not only would not join with the tenants, but, as we have seen, they abandoned the Irish Council because the middle class intruded themselves into what they regarded as the proper business of the gentry. And to propose the scientific organisation of the whole nation by classes to a country in the condition of Ireland at that time, was like advising protoplasm to get itself a spine and muscles. Our primary difficulty was that the largest class, instead of being capable of scientific organisation,

popular and powerful aristocracy on earth." Speaking of the last meeting of the Confederation, he adds: "Reilly's speech was ludicrously violent." This was a speech suggested by Lalor's letter.—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Mitchel to O'Brien.

* *Nation* Correspondence. Doheny to Duffy.

preferred to lie down and die rather than put themselves in an attitude of self-defence. Lalor's public letters were tame compared to his private exhortations and remonstrances. At the close of January he addressed a letter to me, to be submitted to such Confederates as I thought fit, which, from its vigour and its results, may be regarded as a State paper. He began by complaining that the Seceders had gone into organised action upon mere vague impulse and general feeling, without any determinate plan or, consequently, any fixed purpose. "For no purpose," he said, "can long remain fixed, but must be ever veering and wavering, without a plan to guide, control, and sustain it; and a purpose, without a plan to confine and confirm it, is no purpose at all. Such a plan, too, is wanting as a warrant and a guarantee, to yourselves and to others, that your object is feasible and your means adequate, that you have gauged your enterprise and measured your means, and that the work you call on us to do will not be wasted."

What ought to be their plan? Repeal, he insisted, was an impracticable absurdity. Impracticable, because the necessary means were good for much more; absurd, because the proposed arrangement could not endure, or be endured. And the means, such as they were, were the property of O'Connell; the mass of the people could not estimate the points of difference, and would never be got to join in what could so easily be represented as a hostile movement.

As for military means, if the Confederates had these they would be more than adequate. But they had them

not, nor could they ever command them on this question. Repeal was not an armed man, but a naked beggar. The only martial population Ireland possessed, the small farmers and farm labourers, would never wield a weapon in favour of Repeal. They were quite sick of what was called "bloodless agitation," which was not bloodless to them. To secure Repeal in the only form in which it could be carried, Independence, there was but one way—to link it, like a railway-carriage to the engine, to some other question strong enough to carry both itself and Repeal.

But there was another class of means and mode of force which might be employed: he would call it Moral Insurrection, because its action would be defensive, not aggressive. It was based on the principle that every nation of men is owner of itself, and can never of right be bound to submit to be governed by another people, and that a nation was entitled to assert this principle by refusing obedience to usurped authority, and maintaining and defending such refusal. But how was it to shape its disobedience so that it might be successful? It must select *one law* for disobedience, because it was impossible successfully to refuse obedience to the entire code of the dominant country; this one law must be essential to Government, must form no part of the Moral Code, and must be easily resisted and hard to enforce. Could any such law be named in a country where there were no direct taxes? The one impost that could be refused he indicated as *rent*, and this was a contest for which an army would be found in the

agricultural population. He entreated the Confederates to fall back on this measure.

"By one move alone you can meet and match—and by that same move you will checkmate England. One move alone can save the stakes now—and among those stakes are the name and fame of you and yours. Men have given to you their faith, and hearts, and hopes, for your bold bearing and bold words. Even I myself am now trusting to you, and to your help, instead of looking round for other help and another course. Are you ready to redeem your own words, pledged in the sunshine of summer weather? Are you ready to redeem them now in this day of sadness and storm, and to justify our faith when we followed your leading? Are you up to the mark and work of this one hour in lieu of the 'life's labour' you promise? Strip, then, and bid Ireland strip."

I circulated this paper, as the author desired, among the principal Confederates. It fascinated Mitchel. He repelled it at first, and resisted it for weeks. It was, in effect, a deliberate reversal of all he had been preaching from his entry on public life down to the hour of its receipt. But in the end he adopted it in its entirety, as completely as a man adopts a new religion; and it became the basis and origin of the entire scheme of national policy associated with his name. It was a very powerful and impressive appeal; after the failure of so many other resources, when men were driven to desperation by wrongs without remedy, it was like a glimpse of paradise to see any road to national safety. But it needed a strange ignorance of the people and the era to believe that in truth it *was* a road. To me Lalor's theory seemed a fantastic dream. His angry peasants,

chafing like chained tigers, were creatures of the imagination—not the living people through whom we had to act. Famine, suffering, the servile doctrine of perpetual submission, had made them incapable of spontaneous self-assertion. They knew almost nothing of the use of arms, they were demoralised by public works and pauper relief, and the only advisers whom they entirely trusted would inevitably oppose such a movement. A rising of peasants had never succeeded, except for a spurt, because revolutions need the mind as well as the muscle of a people. And to attempt such an enterprise implied that we would break with the classes upon whom we relied for ultimate success. Break with O'Brien and the national gentry, with Ferguson and the national middle class, and stake the last chance of Ireland, not merely on the peasantry, but on such a fragment of the peasantry as could be induced to reject the guidance of O'Connell and the priests. Such a policy, if it was not supremely right, was the height of human folly, for it flung away all we had gained by years of labour. There is no medium. If it was not the right road every step was a step further and further astray. And we had soon reason to understand that the danger of losing our best associates was not a sentimental or imaginary evil, but a trouble to be encountered on the instant.

These objections were so cogent that Mitchel agreed with me that the new policy should not be broached in the Confederation. To broach it there seemed to me as manifest bad faith as John O'Connell's introduction of

sectarianism into Conciliation Hall. In this frame of mind, he assured Lalor that he concurred in a great measure with his scheme;* but the Confederation was framed on other lines and he could not preach it there; and he informed O'Brien of this intention, and of his design to persuade Lalor and Fr. Kenyon, who had become one of Lalor's converts, to take a similar course. But to persuade Lalor proved a task beyond his strength :—

"I received your letter," Mitchel wrote to O'Brien, "enclosing those of Mr. Kenyon, Lalor, and Trenwith. † And I need hardly repeat what I mentioned to you before, that my views of those gentlemen's doctrines entirely agree with yours, so far as the practical interference of the Confederation is concerned. And to that effect I have expressed myself in my replies to all three. As to the abstract justice of the case indeed, and the ultimate settlement of the tenure question which should be kept steadily in view, my doctrine is nearly identical with Lalor's. And if Ireland were now in *sui juris*, I should give all the help I could to any fair movement to realise and give effect to those doctrines. And in the meantime I hold it to be no more than bare honesty on my part, and on the part of those who think with me, to say what we think on those points. . . I also have full confidence in the principle of the Confederation, and mean to work steadily in accordance with it. The expostulations of my correspondents have not at all converted me; on the contrary, I hope yet to convert them—at least, two of them—not from their

* "I see no reason to prevent me from mentioning that, in about a month from the date and delivery of my paper, I received a letter from John Mitchel, stating that, on perusal and consideration of its contents, he had fully adopted my views, and that he meant to act on them so soon as occasion should fit and serve."—J. F. Lalor to the Confederate Clubs, June, '48.

† Mr. Trenwith was Secretary of a Tenant Right organisation in Munster.

theories, but from their scheme of practically carrying them out; and I hope to see Lalor and Father Kenyon (neither of whom we can afford to lose) working cordially with us yet." *

Lalor insisted, with reason indeed, that it was insensate to accept his theory, and not put it into operation. The state of the country made it a duty not to postpone it for an hour, if it was an effectual remedy. From time to time he applied the goad Mitchel could least resist; he treated him as feeble and retrograde, and unworthy to be the confidant of great ideas:

"I know the Confederation and you by speeches and writing only. But men may speak and write forcibly and yet act very feebly, and be very competent to criticise, yet utterly incompetent to construct. Ireland's greatest and last opportunity was in your hands—a revolution that would have put your own names in the blaze of the sun for ever was in your hands; you have flung it away as the cock flung the diamond, useless to him, as the crisis was to you. Vain to him the flash of the gem which he could not polish; vain to you were the lightnings of heaven and the meteors of earth which you could or would not kindle and guide. . . You appear to be under mistakes as to my objects which I cannot permit you to retain. I have nothing to do with the Landlord-and-tenant question, as understood. The question of the tenure by which the actual cultivator of the soil should hold his land is one for an Irish Parliament. My object is to repeal the Conquest—not any part or portion, but the whole and entire conquest of seven hundred years—a thing much more easily done than to repeal the Union. That the absolute (allodial) ownership of the lands of Ireland is vested of right in the people of Ireland—that they, and none but they, are the first landowners and lords paramount, as well as the lawmakers of this island—that all titles to land are invalid not conferred or

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Mitchel to O'Brien, August 8, '47.

confirmed by them—and that no man has a right to hold one foot of Irish soil otherwise than by grant of tenancy and fee from them, and under such conditions as they may annex, of suit and fealty, &c.—these are my principles. To such landowners as could be brought to recognise this right of the Irish people, and to swear allegiance to this island-queen, I would grant new titles. Those who might refuse should cease to be landowners or quit this land, and their lands be vested in the occupying tenants." *

He had already stated the method by which he would accomplish his object, a universal refusal of rent. Some modification of this scheme which Mitchel suggested he treats with the disdain of a master lecturing an insubordinate pupil :—

"Our means, whether of moral agitation, military force, or moral insurrection, are impotent against the English Government, which is beyond their reach; but resistless against the English garrison who stand here, scattered and isolated, girdled round by a mighty people, whom their leaders alone have turned into mean slaves and sneaking beggars. Should the landlords be blind to the argument I have mentioned, and England come to the relief and rescue of her garrison, then of course there should be resistance and defence, just of the kind required to drill and discipline, as the hare-course, short and sharp, trains and tempers and hardens the blooded hunter. The question of time is everything. I want a prepared, organised, orderly, and resistless revolution. *You* would only have an unprepared, disorderly, and vile jacquerie. You plead against locking the stable door until the horse has been stolen, or is about to be stolen. But the lock and key have yet to be forged. You wont help to forge them.

* Mr. Lalor has been erroneously quoted as an advocate for the proposal known as the "Nationalisation of Land" (a proposal to make land the permanent property of the State), but it will be seen that his intention was widely different.

But you may possibly overtake us and help to see the door locked by others. Good. You throw away the Elections too, for on no other argument than mine will you get a friese coat to vote for you. Ireland was ready to strip for battle, and none flinched but the fire-eaters." *

The confidence of the Confederates that a section of the gentry would declare for self-government was not founded on vague belief, but on the specific promises of a man incapable of deceiving us. Early in November O'Brien wrote to me in continuation of previous speculations on the same subject:—

"The tone of feeling amongst the gentry is much changed with reference to Repeal. I hope that you will abstain from attacking the landlords as a class. When an individual does wrong spare him not, but do not render hostile to you a whole class—the most influential—by indiscriminate and undeserved censure." †

Three weeks later he was more specific:—

"If we are cautious I think that we shall *soon* obtain the support of no inconsiderable number of the landlords of Ireland." ‡

And he constantly indicated that a special responsibility lay upon me; an appeal which in the mouth of a man who did not condescend to flatter, and was incapable of falsehood, had necessarily great weight. ‖

* *Nation* Correspondence. Lalor to Mitchel.
† O'Brien to Duffy, Nov. 5th.
‡ Ibid, Nov. 28th.
‖ "Allow me in candour to say that much depends *upon you.* If you have strength sufficient to carry you through the work, and if you can subdue your disposition to contemplate ulterior contingencies which we all trust may never happen, *you* are the man who ought to guide the party

But he moved with cautious steps where the interest of others was concerned. Of personal risk he was as regardless as any man I have seen confront difficulties, but the moral qualities which made him so trustworthy as a friend tended to paralyse him as a popular leader. To restrain Mitchel from cutting his moorings and sailing to unknown latitudes, was not a more necessary task at that time than to persuade O'Brien to more decisive action, and the correspondence of the period is full of such exhortations:—

"Bindon showed me a letter in which you expressed hesitation in committing men to measures which they may regret hereafter. Trust me, we will never repeal the Union if we hesitate to commit any man to measures in which we are ready to embark in ourselves. St. Paul had not a holier mission, and such questions of prudence seem to me to have no proper place in our work, more than in his. Washington, Tone, and Davis did not stop to measure these probabilities; no more should we. It is God's work and our country's, and 'tis worth taking all such risks, be they great or small."*

And again, when "methinks the writer did protest too much":—

"This is my duty, or the humblest man's in the Council, but how much more is it *yours*, the leader of the movement? Men have made heavy sacrifices to join the Confederation; you owe

which you have been mainly instrumental in forming. So far as I can learn, all entertain respect for your character and abilities, and many an affectionate attachment to you in your character of their friend. Of the rest, some are too young, others too fiery, others wanting in energy, others unequal to the task in point of ability. How sincerely do I wish that there were twenty of us capable of guiding the vessel freighted with Ireland's hopes into the haven of National Freedom."—O'Brien to Duffy. (The italics are in the original).

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

success to them, and success is only to be had by gathering all the men we can influence into its ranks. If I were a landed proprietor, a member of Parliament, and the descendant of an Irish king, so help me God, I would repeal the Union." *

The gentry, as gentry, were little to me: I thought them in general selfish and arrogant. But they could aid us to re-establish an Irish nation, and for this purpose their help would have been cheaply purchased by large concessions. It was my rooted conviction, which time amply justified, that some at least of the gentry, and the young men of the middle class as a body, were indispensable: without them we could neither gain our end in peace or war. It was they who had made the revolutions the world was proudest to recall. In America, merchants, militia officers, landowners, and public officials led the movement which made her a sovereign republic; in France, nobles, lawyers, priests, journalists, and students were the tribunes of the people in the first revolution; a brewer, a play-actor, an usher, and a veterinary surgeon were the lowest of its demagogues. In Greece, princes, prelates, and nobles were the conspirators and the insurrectionists; in Canada, members of the legislature; in Belgium, capitalists, senators, lawyers, and ecclesiastics; in France, in 1830, bankers, deputies, journalists; and for mob-leaders, the young students of the Polytechnique. In Sicily, quite recently, the constituted authorities of the country planned, led, and accomplished the revolution. In every case the great body of the people gave a

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

momentum to the movement without which it would have failed. They were its gaunt hands and iron sinews; but if they had been its brain and eyes, it would have spent its strength in aimless fury.

The effect which Lalor's scheme produced convinced me that it was necessary, if we did not accept it, to substitute another as specific. For opportunities and the errors of their enemy occur in vain for a people who have not made up their own mind. Where we meant to go we knew full well; but the road we had to travel was new and unsurveyed, and if we did not examine its bearings and boundaries it might lead us into a morass. I urged this conviction strongly on my friends, and it was agreed that the experiment should be made. The Council ordered a plan to be prepared of the means and agencies by which we hoped to repeal the Union. If it were fit to publish, it would give confidence to our friends; at any rate, it would fix the minds of the leaders on a predetermined policy, which had undergone searching scrutiny, and save us from contradictory action and the fatal habit of doing and undoing. It was not proposed to deal with the famine, or any collateral question, but simply with the problem, "How can the Union be repealed?" O'Brien was the leader, and we naturally wished him to undertake the task, which he did.* But it is nearly impossible for one man to carry out effectively

* "I trust you are engaged on the report of the policy of the Confederation. It is looked for impatiently, and is becoming essential. You will see by a selection of articles from the English and Conservative papers that the Confederation is at length getting a fair hearing. This is the moment to press forward."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

the design of another. He may be imperfectly seized of it; he sees it, perhaps, at a different angle of incidence. At any rate, the paper he produced was not such a proposal as could compete with the brilliant and vigorous scheme of Lalor. We knew O'Brien well enough to be assured that we could say so without offence, and we told him it would not suffice.

"As to your report on the means by which the Union may be repealed (Mitchel wrote) Duffy and I have read it together; and we both think such a document ought to be more *specific*. Indeed, I begin to be sorry we promised such a programme of Repeal at all, because revolutions of that kind never transact themselves according to programme. Your idea in drawing up this seems to have been that the only thing specific we can point out is the mode of bringing up the public mind to a state of preparedness, and keeping it there, so as to be eager to seize any opportunity. But Duffy says what he had in his mind when he promised (in the Organisation Report) a report on this subject was that we should have some rational answer to give to practical but timid people who ask *how* we mean to repeal the Union. Now, I think, if such an answer be attempted at all, it must develop not one sole plan followed out to the end, but three or four of the possible and probable series of events which may evidently lead to the result. It must show (for one way) how a Parliamentary campaign conducted honestly and boldly might bring the state of public business in Parliament to such a position that Repeal would be the only solution,—for another way, how systematic passive opposition to and contempt of *law* might be carried out through a thousand details so as to virtually supersede English dominion here, and make the mere Repealing statute an immaterial formality (this, I may observe, is *my* way*)

* The italics are in the original. But this the reader knows was Lalor's way; to replace which by something more feasible was the object of the Report.

—and for a third way, how, in the event of a European war, a strong national party in Ireland could grasp the occasion to do the whole work instantly, with perhaps half a dozen other contingencies and their possible use. It should also show how, and to what extent, all those methods of operation might be combined. I think such a paper could be drawn up so as neither to be dangerous in point of law nor futile from vagueness, and might really shed some light on the dubious road we have to travel. It is not very clear to me that it is wise to attempt such a thing, but certainly we do not like *this* Report as an exposition of Confederate policy. If we could avoid the necessity of furnishing a scheme of repealing the Union altogether, it might be best of all. Such a document at best would be little other than a mark for criticism to the sneering enemy." *

At the same time I wrote to O'Brien:—

"Your report would make a useful lecture, but my notion of the document required is one which would be as exact and comprehensive as one of Napoleon's plans of a campaign, sent to a particular General to fight it out. And even if we did not publish it, I hold it to be essential to have such a document drawn up, after mature consideration and discussion. . . . Men never get even their own ideas clearly before them till they have written them out. What is best to do, perhaps, is to discuss our policy thoroughly when you come to town, and then to draw up the document for our future guidance." †

In the end the task was thrown upon me. When the report was produced it was ordered to be taken into consideration on a fixed day, and a call of the Council was made, which secured an unprecedented attendance from the country and from the Irish community in England.

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Mitchel to O'Brien, Sept. 30, '47.
† Ibid. Duffy to O'Brien.

The purpose of the report may be briefly stated. There was no organisation or AUTHORITY in existence in Ireland which was entitled to speak for the nation, or would be obeyed by it. The best men in the country naturally chafed with angry impatience at the condition of the people, but rashness and defeat were stamped upon our history; and if we would not fail again, we must create such an Authority as a preliminary step to the *ultimo ratio* of nations. How was this to be done? The Irish people had the power, if they would use it. The Irish people could, if they thought fit, use it irresistibly. They might seize upon all the institutions which still remain to the country—the corporations, grand juries, boards of guardians, town commissioners, and the representatives of Ireland in the Imperial Parliament. In all these positions they were entitled to employ the moral weight belonging to official position to give force and authority to the demand of the nation for the revival of law and extinction of Parliamentary usurpation.

And in the House of Commons pre-eminently this ought to be done. A band of resolute and capable men within the walls of Parliament would, in the words of a high Conservative authority, "be more formidable than an armed insurrection." They could probably win converts among reasonable Englishmen by demonstrating the justice of our national claims, but, at any rate, they would cause them to be listened to by "making Irish interests cross and impede and rule the British senate. For it was not by Parliament,

but in spite of it—not by its grace and influence, but because of its utter imbecility against the right vigorously asserted, that they would succeed." And from that platform alone was it possible to recover the sympathy of foreign nations lost in '44.

The elected representatives of the people of all conditions, from those who came close to them in their daily labours to the men sent to fight for the cause in London, would constitute such an authority as was wholly wanting at present; such an authority as was indispensable to a movement of the whole nation:—

"When the representatives in Parliament had made the cause of Ireland plain to all men, and when the organisation at home had been so successful as to raise these representatives to the undeniable position of the spokesmen of a nation, it would be their right and duty (as it is demonstrably within their power) to stop the entire business of Parliament till the constitution of Ireland was restored. But this is a measure which, to be successful, must be taken on behalf of a nation. It must have the authority of an outraged nation to justify it, and raise it above the tactics of mere party conflict; and the strength of a banded nation to maintain it, if it be violently suppressed. For from such a position there seem but two paths: that of concession to Ireland, or the forcible expulsion of the Irish representatives from the House of Commons."

In this contingency a genuine Council of Three Hundred could be constituted:—

"Let the ejected members fall back upon the banded and organised people whom they represented. For by this time the people would be banded. Let a great council of the nation, consisting of the elected representatives in Parliament, in the muni-

cipalities, and in the unions, and elected delegates from classes not otherwise represented, be convened, and a final demand made on behalf of the Irish nation, calling for the re-assembly of the Irish Parliament."

To such an Authority Fox had capitulated in Ireland in 1782 as Peel had in Canada sixty years later; and the minister of England, whoever he might be, when an organised nation made its demand, would follow the precedent. If not, Ireland could then do, what Grattan would assuredly have done in '82 had his appeal been in vain, clutch the justice which was refused.

But to carry the nation with them they must not outrun its sympathy:—

"Wherever there is freedom of speech and franchise, moral weapons exist to win independence on which the people are bound to rely till they prove inadequate. They were adequate in Canada, in Rome, in Prussia, in Denmark, and even in Sicily. And nowhere has a popular movement succeeded that did not exhaust the resources of the Constitution first."

And above all, if an Authority which the people recognised were not created by the method proposed, or some other adequate method—if, instead of foresight and preparation, rash and headlong counsels prevailed, the attempt to deliver the country would end in a parish brawl.

The case of Ireland had never been made known to foreign nations; but it concerned them and us that it should be made known:—

"In the era of universal spoliation, when France seized upon Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Germany, and incorporated them with herself, England, confessedly to balance these aggressions, seized upon, and incorporated with herself, the independent kingdom of Ireland. . . The usurpations of France have been all abandoned, and the nationality of each of the despoiled states has been restored. The nationality and independence of Ireland alone have been withheld; and this movement was one to compel their restoration. Hence it would be seen that our object was not one in violation, but in defence and fulfilment, of the laws and constitution of our native country of Ireland."

Believing with the English jurist, Lord Coke, that "Parliament cannot take away the protection which the law of nature giveth," we repudiated the Act of Parliament by which the rights of an ancient and populous kingdom were held in abeyance; and we maintained that when the Irish people, by an adequate exhibition of their will as a nation, demanded this restoration, any authority resisting it would be in rebellion against the free people and distinct kingdom of Ireland.*

This report became the occasion of a fierce controversy, which will not be understood without reverting to transactions that happened between the period when it was ordered, and the period when it was presented.†

* Mr. P. J. Smyth in his memoir of General Meagher, suggests that the plan would have failed for want of adequate public spirit in the country. "As a plan of campaign it was as perfect as Grant's against Richmond; but, in order to ensure its success, two things were requisite:—1st. A high degree of public virtue among all classes of the Irish community; 2nd. A popular leadership, equal in power to that of O'Connell. The former might, perhaps, be created by following up Duffy's plan, but, at the time, it only partially existed. The latter could not be created, for the whole Young Ireland party, with its eloquence, its enthusiasm, and its fervour could never command the popular following of O'Connell."

† Jan. 11th. Mr. Ross, of Bladensburgh, in the chair. Mr. Gavan Duffy brought up a report on the method of obtaining an independent

Though Mitchel did not broach Lalor's theory in the Confederation, he could not altogether refrain from foreshadowing it in the *Nation*, and he naturally spoke of his new opinions among his friends. But he presented the policy in a shape which was quite fatal to its practical effect. As Ireland paid no direct tax, Lalor proposed a strike against rent; the Government must aid the landlords to collect it, and they might, he believed, be baffled and defeated in the attempt. Mitchel pointed out a direct tax collected by the State, and which could, he conceived, be more successfully resisted than rent, and he substituted a refusal to pay poor-rate. It is scarcely possible to conceive a change more destructive of the original policy. Lalor's scheme would embarrass an unfriendly gentry; Mitchel would starve the people whom he desired to save—for in a famine poor-rate was the peasant's income.* The rule in England is first the poor-rate, then the rent; first the pauper, then the landlord. In England there was a Poor Law in operation since the reign of Queen Elizabeth, under which the local poor were supported by local property; in Ireland, where destitution was more common than in any country in Europe, the landed

Irish Parliament. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion for its adoption. Mr. Mitchel moved an amendment against any report on the subject being adopted. The original motion was supported by O'Gorman, Pigot, Dillon, P. J. Smyth, the mover, and ten others; the amendment by Mr. Martin and four others.—Minute Book of the Irish Confederation.

* Heretofore landlords had agents who collected their rents, and they supported them; the Grand Jury had agents to collect the County Cess, and they supported them; now, for the first time, the poor man has an agent to collect *his* rent; that agent is the poor-rate collector, and he should be supported by the poor.—The parish priest of Dingle cited in the "Irish Crisis," by Sir Charles Trevelyan, p. 162.

proprietors had evaded this burthen down to the reign of Queen Victoria. By the abandonment of public works it had become the sole provision for the destitute. If a man preferred mendicancy the law stopped the way; persons wandering from one district to another (for this criminal purpose) were, by an act of the last session, subjected to a month's imprisonment with hard labour. It was under these circumstances the people were invited to strike against poor-rate. O'Brien strongly protested against the earliest suggestion of this course. He complained that the *Nation* was encouraging the non-payment of a rate which he regarded as the rental of the poor. The landlords and farmers were well enough disposed to evade the burthen, but without poor-rate how could the labouring class be supported? Mr. Chetwode, from whom so much was hoped, wrote me that he was not afraid to face Repeal, or what probably lay beyond Repeal, but he was afraid of the theories of property which began to prevail, and which would repel the landlords from the Irish party for ever.

It amounts to a signal judgment on Mitchel's theory that not one of his comrades accepted it. Many of them had a warm regard for him, and would have preferred to agree with him. It is impossible to believe that they shrank from the consequences, for, before three-quarters of a year had elapsed, they staked their lives individually in the same quarrel. The men who had created the party, or sustained it in its greatest peril, refused without exception to second him. Dillon, Meagher, Pigot, O'Gorman, Doheny, entreated him to

abandon the frantic project. Pigot, who believed only in force, but force resting on opinion, described Mitchel's plan as "an insurrection without its courage or its opportunities."* He was warmly supported by Reilly, a vigorous and gifted boy, who had not reached the years of discretion, and by him alone. Martin proposed a benevolent arrangement that everybody should be free to teach what he thought proper, which was another name for chaos; but his own opinions were then, and to the end of his life continued to be, the opinions taught by Thomas Davis, that we should guard the interests of the whole nation.

The problem being how Ireland could regain the control of her own affairs, the theory that she would regain them by abandoning the thinking and educated class, and throwing ourselves on the support of the peasantry alone, seemed to these men the maddest absurdity that had ever entered a human brain. It would render success against England impossible, for there is no road from social confusion to national independence. In Lalor's case, it was the monomania of a recluse; in Mitchel's, it was founded on complete ignorance of the agencies on which he relied. He had never been in Munster; he had not seen the men on whom he counted to fight, and they had not seen him. The peasantry of the South, at that time unfamiliar with arms, and accustomed to rely chiefly on their shillelaghs, he represented to himself as Calabrians or Tyrolese, with rifles always in their hands and ammunition in their pouches. But, little as

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

he understood them, they understood him still less. "The people of Munster," exclaimed Meagher, "know as little of Mitchel as of Mahomet!" * The class above the peasantry, who must combine mind with muscle before a popular movement had any chance of success, scarcely knew him better. As chairman of a sub-committee of the Irish Council, he had sent out instructions to the Poor-Law guardians to report to the Council the amount of cereal food in their unions respectively—an order which O'Connell in '43 could have got universally obeyed. From all Ireland there did not come a single return—an incident very instructive to those who can read the language of facts. The governing aim of a policy ought to be to succeed. Anything short of that was not worth counting; and a peasant rising could not succeed.

But it was useless, he was reminded, to debate what the peasantry could do; for it was very plain they would do nothing for us. They would not vote at our bidding, still less would they fight. We had not found the gentry antagonists half so angry and prejudiced as the populace. They would have stoned us at Cork, butchered us at Belfast, and made a bonfire of a Confederate meeting at Kilkenny. We had won the intelligent artisans who read and thought, and the young

* "It is very hard to know the Irish peasantry. Citizens seldom do. The Confederates knew no more of Ireland than the Cockneys do. There is a great want of candour amongst us. Except the priests, every man's hand is against us. We have, therefore, acquired the habit of hiding our opinions even from each other. One fact is certain, that we love Ireland, and would serve her if we could see how. The money contributed to the National Treasury is my proof."—Private Letter. *Nation* Correspondence.

men in towns universally, but certainly not the peasantry.

A little while ago he had relied on the policy of the Confederation, and pronounced it sufficient; when, he was asked, had it changed its character? It did not promise immediate results; but, in our case, immediate results were impossible without a union of the whole nation; as impossible as in Rome when it lay in ruins, or in Holland when it was flooded by the ocean. The present was hard to bear, and a better future was not immediately visible, but we had no choice but to work with the means heaven provided. That saying of Davis was eternally true, that the man is not made to be a ruler of his time who cannot use its forms instead of sighing for others which are not at his disposal. The courage to be patient under wrong and injustice, till a method by which it can be righted is reached, is among the gifts which have made patriots dear to mankind. O'Connell's latest doctrine, that it was not permissible to fight for liberty under any circumstances, was not more irrational than the doctrine that it was proper to fight for it forthwith, without any relation to the disposition of the people, the state of preparation, the opportuneness of the time, or the relative force at the disposal of the belligerents. And an immediate conflict would be the necessary result of the policy proposed.

The reasons, which were confessedly good, for excluding the new policy from the Confederation, were still better for excluding it from the leading articles of the *Nation*. It was quite useless to maintain silence on

the platform if the journal declared itself on any question, for the public insisted upon treating them as identical. And beyond the ground of public policy there was the personal consideration that I was responsible for the *Nation*, and these were not my opinions. I was acting with a comrade with whom I had never had any difference, whom I cordially liked and admired, and I yielded all that could be yielded with honour. Any one who has held office in the republic of letters will understand how difficult the task is to harmonise the opinion of independent thinkers. But the difficulty was greatly increased in this case by the controversy with O'Connell. We were preaching freedom of opinion and the right to differ. It was the hobby of the hour, and it was inevitable that it should be ridden hard.

But my opinions were part of myself. I had encountered the power of O'Connell rather than deny them, and there was a point where resistance became a duty. We had many friendly conferences *tête-à-tête*, or with the aid of mutual friends; but when the question is whether two men can travel together—one of whom proposes to go east and the other west—there is but one result possible.*

The difficulty was complicated by renewed complaints from O'Brien that the cause was being ruined by violence, which estranged the gentry and compromised

* A common friend reminds me of a conversation which I had with Mitchel at that time in his presence. I urged him to accept the method of the report because, if it was slower, it was sure to succeed in the end. "Yes," he replied, "you might get the Constitution of 1782 by the time 1882 arrives, but we will all be in our graves then."

him with the community. The violence was attributable to the horrors of the time, which might well render men frantic, and to the inhuman tardiness of the bulk of the gentry in taking sides; and on this point I was not disposed to yield anything. If they had done their duty by the people and the country, there would have been no violence.

"The tone of the article you refer to," I wrote to O'Brien, "was provoked by J. O'C.'s slavish and disgraceful address, in which he told the people to rely upon the workhouse and pauper relief. I would rather a shilling of rent was not paid for the next year, I would rather my own income went along with it, than that the people sank into this irreclaimable bog of slavery. For the rest, though I will not permit any renewal of the advice, if the landlords abandon the country, may the country abandon them! What I urged upon you in my last letter is strictly true. If you, or any one else, can induce the gentry to make common cause with the people, we all may be saved; if not, if they go on maintaining English dominion, which robs us now of our daily bread, in addition to its old hereditary sins, neither God nor man will tolerate them. England is willing to hunt them down, and if another season passes without their taking part with us who would save them? I for one, will regard them as devoted and accursed, and wish God-speed to their destruction. If they will not help Ireland they are an impediment, and hence to be got out of the way. But if they will join us, their rights will become part of the national care, and we will be bound to defend them as we would defend Repeal itself. But I am sick of pampering them in their lazy and dishonest neglect of their duties as Irishmen. Think of another year like the last!—more deaths, more slavish whining, more ignorant despair; making us the laughing-stock of Europe." *

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien, Oct. 6, 1847.

Samuel Bindon, who was a member of the Confederation, and busy

Meantime, Lalor, weary of waiting, determined to act for himself. He summoned a monster meeting of tenant-farmers at Holy Cross, in Tipperary, to found a League which should assert the natural property of the people in the soil of the country, and the right of the occupying tenantry to a sufficient subsistence out of the crop, and sufficient seed for next year, superior and prior to every other claim.* He was now to learn the painful interval which separates speculation from action. The meeting did not answer his hopes in any respect. It was held on a Sunday, immediately after mass, and naturally secured the attendance of a large local congregation; but the number present did not amount

in every social or literary enterprise for national ends, was interrupted in his work by tidings which would scarcely render him tolerant of a jacquerie. "I was going to send you my hearty thanks, and to write telling you of all Hudson's thoughts and plans, but I can't hold the pen. I have just heard by letter that a man in the employment of the gentleman who collected my rents, and who was in my fullest confidence and friendship, is shot dead, and three other men who were with him, dead or dying. This occurred within one mile and a half of Limerick Barracks, where two regiments are quartered."—*Nation* Correspondence. (Bindon to Duffy.) I cannot fix the day on which this incident occurred. The habit, which is peculiarly Irish, I think, of omitting to date letters, has been a constant plague and perplexity to me throughout my present task. Some methodical men, like O'Brien and Maddyn, always dated their briefest notes, but of the mass of correspondence with which I have had to deal, there was not one letter in ten of which I had not to determine its place by the post-mark, when their happened to be one, or by some other collateral evidence. To a man to whom all the circumstances were not familiar they would present a series of hopeless puzzles. I received back from some intimate friends, for the purposes of this book, my own letters during a great part of the period dealt with, and, to my amazement, I found them as dateless as the rest. And here is a further evidence that I shared the slovenly and unsystematic training which to this day is, I fear, characteristic of young Irishmen. "I have no doubt ——'s letter was very bad, but I would form a better judgment if I saw it. Aren't you ashamed of your irregularity talking about an enclosure which you did'nt enclose? The war editor puts your conduct in the strongest point of view. 'If,' says he, 'that was a dispatch, his neglect might cause the loss of an army.'"

* This meeting was held on Sunday, 18th Sept., 1847.

to one per cent. of the monster meetings of '43. The imaginative political arithmetic of the time only rated the attendance at four thousand.* He acted as secretary himself, and proposed the majority of the resolutions. Shy, suspicious, deaf, near-sighted—never did a powerful will contend with greater natural impediments than Lalor in addressing himself directly to the people. Doheny attended in the character of a tenant-farmer of Tipperary, and gave him a general support; but William Connor, of Inch, who was known as "the farmers' friend" in those days, stopped the way. He considered the resolutions were "dubious," and wished to substitute perpetuity and valuation for general propositions.† Lalor, who had no experience in managing public meetings, or in dealing with dissent, and who was outraged at the imputation of having framed dubious propositions, lost his temper. He declared that Connor was "a dangerous man" and a mischief-maker, and that the meeting had something else to do than listen to long-winded harangues. The chairman, a tenant-farmer, pronounced Mr. Connor out of order, which he certainly was not; and as he had some supporters, and persisted in addressing them, the meeting ended in confusion. It passed Lalor's reso-

* A well-known reporter, named Christy Hughes, who possessed a good deal of sly humour, being asked on some public inquiry how reporters contrived to ascertain the exact attendance at public meetings—"Well," he said, "I believe we guess it; and if it be a meeting of our opponents, we divide the sum by two—if it is a meeting of our friends, we multiply it by four."

† This is the Mr. Connor whose proposals for the settlement of the land question are cited with approval in J. S. Mills' "Political Economy."

lutions, but it scarcely understood their significance; for the abstract propositions were embarrassed by a contradictory proposal to establish the Ulster Tenant Right in the South.*

The difficulties in the *Nation* office increased, and at length it became necessary to say to Mitchel plainly that I would rather perish than be a party to stopping the collection of poor-rate till some other method of feeding the poor was provided; that in his whole scheme the means proposed seemed to me altogether inadequate to the end proposed, and, being sure to break down, were not noble or heroic at all, but fantastic and childish; and that I could not consent to their being further developed in the *Nation*. He said he would retire from the journal; by separating both would have fair play, and truth would have fair play.

The leading Confederates took infinite pains to accommodate matters, but without effect.

During the period of negotiation, Mitchel tried my patience sorely by defending negro slavery, and denouncing the emancipation of the Jews as an unpardonable sin. I could not permit the *Nation* to be carried over to the side of oppression on any pretence, and

* Lalor was apparently unpopular in some quarters; probably for his recent opinions. And, if this were the ground, the fact will help us to gauge the feasibility of his project. Doheny, in describing an interview with him at this time, said:—"I had another project in my head which I communicated to him—namely, that of starting a local weekly paper, confined to the simple question of advancing the tenants' cause. That was suggested to me by a priest here who offered money. When I communicated to him that I wished for Lalor's co-operation, he declined having anything to do in it. At all events, I would not engage in that until we had an opportunity of consulting together upon it."—*Nation* Correspondence. Doheny to Duffy.

I struck both these escapades out of the proofs, and entreated him to spare me so painful a task for the future. But friendly remonstrance failing, my duty was very plain; and I said to my colleague, once for all, "The doctrines of the *Nation* are well known to you, and nothing contrary to them can or shall be published in leading articles, or in the equally authoritative form of 'Answers to Correspondents' for the future." He had himself, as assistant editor, applied this rule to all the other contributors without stint, and they recognised and approved of the practice. But he declined to have it applied to himself, and decided to retire on the instant. *

We parted without ill-will; with the mutual intention, I believe, that no accident of fortune should place us on unfriendly relations. Mitchel wrote to me in this spirit:—

"I do not blame you," he said in the note announcing his retirement from the *Nation*, "I do not blame you in the *slightest*

* I was asked by a well-meaning outsider among our common friends if it was becoming in the *Nation* to limit freedom of opinion. The question was not the least in the world whether there was to be freedom of opinion. James Lalor, with whom the new policy originated, had had a full hearing; and Mitchel stated it anew in a lecture to a Confederate Club. The question was whether I, who was alone responsible for the character of the journal, should be made appear to hold opinions which I did not hold. There is scarcely any one, possessed of the ordinary faculties of a reasoning being, who will contend, I fancy, that I ought to have allowed the character and aims of the *Nation* to be fundamentally altered while the change did not represent my own convictions, and as little represented the convictions of the party for which it habitually spoke. An editor's rights are limited, but they are specific. Whoever has read Francis Jeffrey's lamentations over the "conceit and obstinacy" of Thomas Carlyle because he declined to be trimmed and decorated at discretion will recognise how easily the power of an editor may be abused; but, at lowest, he is entitled to say to a contributor—"You shall not make me appear to believe and approve of something which I disbelieve and disapprove."

particular; and, moreover, I am quite certain I could not have worked in subordination to *any other man alive* near so long as I have done with you. And lastly, that I give you credit in all that is past for acting on good and disinterested motives, with the utmost sincerity, and also with uniform kindness to me personally."

Martin at the same time wrote to Smith O'Brien :—

"I do not see how Mitchel can remain in Dublin. He will not dream of starting a paper in opposition to Duffy—that is, a weekly paper. There is talk of getting a daily paper established, as a share-holding concern, with him for editor, and that he should be entirely uncontrolled save by the interference of a committee at the end of each year, to dismiss him if thought advisable. But he won't conduct any paper except one which shall be his own property. Therefore he must go to Belfast or Cork, and there try to establish a new weekly Mitchelite paper. I wish he were fairly started in this new undertaking. It may give new life to the national cause. . . Mitchel and Duffy are still the most cordial friends, but some members of the Council entertain a vague suspicion against a very active and able fellow-member. I must unburthen my mind to you by naming him—Mr. McGee." *

Before this event happened my report was before the Council. At first it was a question simply which of two policies ought, on public grounds, to be preferred. Those to whom the Lalor-Mitchel scheme was least acceptable treated it as an error, not an offence. The

* Martin, who would not consciously injure anyone, was made the agent of disparaging McGee to O'Brien. Not without effect; for immediately after O'Brien wrote to me :—"Tell McGee that he ought to be very cautious to avoid appearing to dictate. I hear complaints that he is disposed sometimes to speak too much in a strain which resembles dictation. Having much confidence in his judgment and abilities, I am persuaded that he will act upon any friendly suggestion which you may offer relative to this matter."—*Nation* Correspondence. O'Brien to Duffy, Dec. 29, 1847.

negotiations which preceded the public controversy were conducted as they might have been in the bosom of a family. The party had been long bound together by ties of mutual confidence and affection. But when the populace were called in as arbiters the morbid suspicion which believes without evidence and hates without cause, and all the dark vices of Jacobinism, were heard of for the first time in the Confederation. And in the end pride, rivalry, and seven other devils fiercer than these, mingled in the fray.

After Mitchel's secession from the *Nation*, there was an element of personal bitterness infused into the contest which rendered a consideration of the proposal on its merits difficult. But the Council passed through the trial successfully. For two weeks the report was debated, sentence by sentence, like a parliamentary bill in committee, and amendments moved by Mitchel were taken into consideration, without any loss of temper or moderation. Pigot, in a letter to O'Brien, who was absent, describes the result:—"After communicating with men on all sides from Cork to Belfast, and from Manchester to London, it is clear that no one agrees with Mitchel and Reilly; a few of the party you know of here (Dublin) need scarcely be thought of with momentary seriousness."* And some days later he wrote: "The report has been all gone through in the Council, and Mitchel's amendments have been negatived in a meeting of over thirty members by a majority of six to one."†

* Jan. 15, '48. Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Pigot to O'Brien.
† Jan. 25. Ibid.

Meagher, who was much disturbed by the conflict between his wishes and his judgment, wrote to O'Brien on the same subject:—

"I feel—in my soul I believe—that an unconstitutional mode of action would not in present circumstances succeed. I am convinced that the only mode we can adopt, the only policy which we can successfully conduct, is the constitutional policy advised by Duffy. And yet, when I see the tyrannical spirit of the upper classes, the Government, the Parliament; when I mark the glee with which they hail the coercion measures now in force; when (as is the case in this county) I find the most peaceful districts in Ireland proclaimed, and have in our very streets and the roads close to the town the most insolent parade of artillery and police and dragoons; when I see all this, and observe, moreover, not the least change of spirit among the gentry—no generous national sentiment stirring among them—but on the contrary a vile thankfulness to that country for its 'protection,' which last year cuffed and spat upon them: when I see all this, my heart sinks under a weight of bitter thoughts, and I am almost driven to the conclusion that it would be better to risk all, to make a desperate effort, and fix at once the fate of Ireland."

O'Gorman was disgusted with the dissensions which began to replace the brotherly regard that used to prevail, and he assured O'Brien he would rather the Confederation perished than be diverted from the noble ends for which it was designed:—

"The Confederation is doomed—its days are numbered. The extreme party seem not all indisposed to urge its dissolution, and I fully concur with you that it is better it should perish than be the organ for the dissemination of the mischievous and foolish doctrines of Infant Ireland. I am now inclined to desire a

public discussion. I would not suffer myself long to rest under the imputation of holding opinions so dangerous."*

Mitchel wished the report and his amendments to be sent to the clubs in the country for consideration. Dillon opposed this course as unwise and unnecessary, and the Council continued to deal with the question themselves.†

The grounds of Mitchel's retirement‡ from the journal were much debated among Confederates, and much misunderstood, and it became necessary to make them public. An explanation was as natural and necessary indeed as when a public man retires from a Government.

* Cahirmoyle Correspondence. O'Gorman to O'Brien. Jan. 18, '48.

† "I procured a postponement of this step until a few of us should have another opportunity of talking with Mitchel. I am not without hopes of inducing him to submit to the majority of the Council, but if he should persevere I shall do all in my power to oppose this measure of sending two rival policies to be decided on by the Clubs throughout the country. I don't consider that any one or two men have a right to expect that a majority of the Council will refrain from recommending to the country the policy which they believe to be the best. The only effect of acceding to their proposal would be to strengthen and make universal this dissension, which is beginning to manifest itself in the Council."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Dillon to O'Brien, Jan. 3, '48.

‡ "You were surprised and annoyed, I am sure, at the publication of Mitchel's letter and mine. But it had become indispensable. The *Nation* office was daily disturbed by persons coming with reports (industriously circulated by some ill-disposed persons) that the men who would not adopt Mitchel's views were *betraying the cause*. Now I am content to stand against the world upon my actual opinions and proceedings in this matter, but not at all upon the entire misrepresentation of them, which had gone abroad to the damage of the *Nation*, the Confederation, and the cause. What has actually happened is for the best. The Confederation was being slowly drawn into Mitchel's views without knowing what they were. They must now choose with their eyes open. You have observed, I presume, the ungenerous tone of Mitchel's letter, which would raise, or at all events justify, the suspicion that I opposed his views only because they were perilous to the *Nation*. I have met nothing in public life half so disheartening as this."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

I stated them on my own behalf, and invited Mitchel to do the same, in the *Nation*.*

Reilly retired from the *Nation* with Mitchel. Before doing so he visited me to say farewell, and left me with tears on his cheeks. He afterwards wrote his resignation in terms which seemed to me generous and manly:—

"My object was not self-seeking—neither money, position, nor ambitious views. I was driven by a love I never could restrain for the freedom of my country, and a hate equally irrestrainable of her enemies, and by nothing else. If you needed any proof that these passions rule me still, I could not offer a greater than this letter, written against my interest, against my feelings, and hazarding ties of friendship begun so early and continued in a manner kindly and gladsome to both of us through times so varying and perilous. However, let me here acknowledge the many debts of kindness I owe you, and which I hope one day or other in some extent to redeem. And let me hope that though our official connection has ceased, our friendship and reciprocal esteem shall not. Mine never can."

But the result was one of the most painful experiences of my life. A fortnight had not elapsed till he attacked me in a letter to the newspapers in terms of reproach and insult, renewed at various intervals during the remainder of his life.† I never answered a word; at first through wounded affection, afterwards from disdain.

* "I think it exceedingly natural that upon the dissolution of partnership (if I may so call it) of two men who were not merely the editors of a political journal, but two great public leaders—two of the ablest men in the country—some explanation should be given to the country of the causes which led to the separation."—Smith O'Brien's speech, meeting of the Confederation, January 30, 1848.

† On the letter in question Mr. Lucas made this comment:—"Mr. Reilly we take from his own letter to be a young man drunk with self-conceit, and as fit for a leader as a lighted match is fit company for a powder magazine.—*Tablet*, January 29, '48.

As Mitchel's new opinions were soon re-stated in public debate more nakedly and trenchantly than in his letter of explanation, it is not necessary to pause upon them here.*

We have now reached the opening of the memorable year '48, and the meeting of the Confederation, at which the Council was chosen annually, was at hand. O'Brien, who had never seen Mitchel's new opinions distinctly formulated before, wrote to the Secretary advising that, after such a profession of faith, it would be improper to re-elect him. Mitchel insisted that a letter published in a newspaper did not compromise the

* As Mr. Mitchel was dissatisfied with my explanation of his policy in that correspondence, I think it proper to specify it in the language he himself employed:—"I desired to preach to them that every farmer in Ireland has a right to his land in perpetuity (let 'law' say as it will); that no landlord who denies that right ought to receive any rent; that tenant-right, however, though the universal right of all Irish farmers never had been, and never would be, recognised or secured by English law; that there was, and will be, no other way of establishing and securing that right except, as in Ulster, by successful intimidation—that is to say, by the determined public opinion of armed men; that, therefore, the power calling itself a 'Government,' which called on the people of Ireland to deliver up their arms, under any pretext, must be the mortal enemy of that people, their rights, their liberties, and their lives . . . Therefore, I desire that the *Nation* and the Confederation should rather employ themselves in promulgating sound instruction upon military affairs, upon the natural lines of defence, which make the island so strong, and the method of making those available; upon the construction and defence of field works, and especially upon the use of proper arms, not with a view to any immediate insurrection, but in order that the stupid 'legal and constitutional' shouting, voting, and 'agitating' that have made our country an abomination to the whole earth, should be changed into a deliberate study of the theory and practice of guerilla warfare, and that the true and only method of regenerating Ireland might in course of time recommend itself to a nation so long abused and deluded by legal humbug . . . In short, I wished to make them recognise in the Poor-Law what it really is: an elaborate machinery for making final conquest of Ireland by 'law.' I therefore urged, from the first, that this law ought to be resisted and defeated; that guardians ought not to act under it, but in defiance of it; that ratepayers ought to offer steady and deliberate passive resistance to it; and that every district ought to organise some voluntary mode of relieving its own poor."

Confederation, and proposed that the opinion of Mr. Henn should be obtained on the point, undertaking for himself and Reilly that, if it was unfavourable, they would retire. O'Brien considered it indispensable that the Confederation should declare itself for or against the new doctrines; and if it declared for them, it was plain he would not remain a member.

"For my own part," he wrote to me, "I have fully resolved that I will not allow myself to be compromised by the reckless violence of men who care very little what is their destiny. Neither, if I can help it, will I allow the Confederation to be compromised. If there be a new Secession, I trust it will not be a secession upon our part from the Confederation. We ought to be able to carry the adoption of our principles and policy in any public discussion, if such should become necessary." *

He drafted resolutions, to be submitted to a public meeting, disavowing the recent letters as an exposition of Confederate opinion. My report was an attempt to harmonise differences within the Council by a common agreement; but as issue was about to be joined before the public, I withdrew it after all its clauses had been passed in committee. † O'Brien's appeal to the Con-

* *Nation* Correspondence. O'Brien to Duffy.

† Jan. 12th: Letter read from Mr. O'Brien recommending that Mr. Mitchel, in consequence of his letter to the *Nation*, be not re-appointed on the Council. Directed, that legal opinion be taken to ascertain whether the letter compromise the Confederation, in which case Mr. Mitchel undertakes to retire. Mr. O'Brien to be informed accordingly.—Minute Book of the Irish Confederation.

Jan. 17th: Special adjourned meeting of Council. Mr. Duffy's report; several clauses adopted.

Jan. 21st: Further adjourned meeting. Mr. Mitchel moved that the principal paragraph be omitted. *Ayes*: Mitchel, Reilly, P. J. Barry, James Cantwell, Philip Gray, and Byrne. *Noes*: Meagher, O'Gorman, Pigot,

federation was a purely defensive measure; for Mitchel distinctly proposed to render the body unfit for any but insurrectionary purposes.

The public meeting, in which Confederate principles were debated, lasted by adjournment for three days. It presented a signal contrast to the Secession debate in Conciliation Hall. Uniform courtesy, good humour, and fair play prevailed, and a sober and temperate tone, which was marvellous. For among the body of the Confederates there was naturally a section ready and eager to welcome extravagant proposals. It is the inevitable fate of revolt to be confronted with new revolts, and to foster a jealous distrust of any authority set up to replace the one which it has disowned. Every reformation breeds its Fifth-Monarchy men, every revolution its Jacobins and Communards. The Anabaptists considered Luther to be a cardinal in a black gown; the Encyclopedists regarded Voltaire, who still acknowledged a Creator, as no better than a bigot; Cromwell was in danger of his life from the fanatical Levellers of his party; and the Jacobins sent Vergniaud to the block. The Confederation could not escape the common law.

A man of sense can scarcely be placed in a more painful position than when he is called on to repress folly, which to some honest supporters looks heroic

Dillon, John Williams, Doheny, Dr. West, M. R. O'Farrell, Michael Crean, Hollywood, Taaffe, John McGrath, Condon, McDermott, Dangan, and the mover.—Minute Book.

Jan. 31st: When the report came up for final reading, Mr. Duffy asked leave to withdraw it, to enable Mr. O'Brien to propose certain resolutions on policy.—Minute Book.

and sublime. But this was a duty for which O'Brien was peculiarly fit. He stated the objections to the new policy with a fairness and moderation which were irresistible. At the outset, it was destructive of the poor; for if the poor-rate was not paid, how could they exist? The voluntary contribution which it was proposed to substitute could not be levied on absentees, or on the resident gentry, or on any one else who thought proper to refuse; and without a large fund to purchase food, the people would undeniably perish. To use the Confederation for preaching this policy would be to make it the instrument of increasing the deaths by starvation by hundreds of thousands. How could he or others press on the Government to do their duty in the premises if the Government could answer that Ireland was evading her own duty? The general scheme of action which Mr. Mitchel advocated would not only drive the landowners to rely upon England, but would furnish an ill-disposed Government with the pretence of suppressing all public liberty in the country. The people were advised to procure arms; but under English law it was an offence punishable with two years' imprisonment to possess arms in a proclaimed district; and there were six counties already proclaimed. It would be proper for those who gave this advice to try the experiment themselves, and not leave it to be made by helpless, uneducated men. If the advice was acted upon the end would inevitably be a massacre. To preach this policy in the Confederation would break faith with their own members. The Confederates,

in answer to opponents, had repeatedly and solemnly denied, in the face of God and their country, by speeches and by specific resolutions, that it was their intention to have recourse to insurrection. If Mr. Mitchel thought that the Confederation had failed, and that a different policy ought to be adopted by the country, it was open to him to invite those who agreed with him to form an association for this purpose. But it was not open to him to use the Confederation, which had obtained support by professing constitutional doctrines for a directly adverse object. How could the organisation exist at all with opinions so conflicting? If he and his friend, Mr. Ross, of Bladensburg, who formed a connecting-link between North and South, were sent to Newry as a deputation to convince the friends of order in Ulster that they would forfeit none of the interests they held dear by joining the Confederation, were they to be told at the same time by Mr. Mitchel that there could be no combination of classes, and that they must prepare for guerilla warfare? Between these courses of action the Confederates must choose, for they were totally incompatible with each other. Their decision would determine whether he and others could continue to be members. He concluded by moving that the meeting disavowed the doctrines contained in the letters of Messrs. Mitchel and Reilly, without attempting to exercise control over the private opinions of members wherever they did not affect the moral or legal responsibility of the Confederation.* Pigot seconded the motion

* Mr. O'Brien proposed a series of ten resolutions, of which this was

because he believed the good faith of the body was pledged to such a disavowal.

Mr. Mitchel's reply was less direct and specific than his policy; for there was no possibility of evading the objection that to follow his advice would be to change the character of the party. The rules of the Confederation declared that the members were to attain their ends by force of opinion among other agencies. But what, he asked, did opinion mean? Must it be always legal, always peaceful?

"We are told, indeed, it was opinion and sympathy, and other metaphysical entities, that rescued Italy, and scared Austria back from Ferrara without a blow. Yes, but it was opinion with the helmet of a national guard on his head, and a long sword by his side; it was opinion standing match in hand, at the breech of a gun charged to the muzzle. . . And comparing the cases of Italy and Ireland, he added: Is it a fact, or not, that the Irish gentry have called in the aid of foreigners to help them to clear their own people from the face of the earth, to help them to crush and trample down, in blood and horror, the rightful claim of the tenant classes to a bare subsistence on the land they till? Is it a fact that they invented a sham council, called the 'Irish Council,' and talked what they called nationality there for a few meetings, until they got what they wanted, a bill to disarm and transport the Irish—and where is their nationality now?"

To Mr. O'Brien's objection that to admit his doctrine would be to break faith with certain Confederates, he

the key-note:—"That this Confederation was established to attain an Irish parliament by the combination of classes and by the force of opinion, exercised in constitutional operations, and that no means of a contrary character can be recommended or promoted through its organisation while its present fundamental rules remain unaltered."

replied that, by adopting the proposed resolution, the meeting would break faith with him and others who never would have consented to be limited to constitutional action.* He had no faith in a parliamentary party. Where were the candidates to be had? Where were the constituencies to elect them? The people must be taught to arm, not for immediate insurrection, but to put an end for ever to the base policy of moral force. After describing the repeated attempts to obtain a combination of classes, which had all failed, he concluded by moving an amendment declaring that the Confederation did not feel called upon to promote, or condemn, doctrines promulgated by its members in letters or speeches, because one of the fundamental rules specified that no member should be bound by any proceeding of that character, to which he had not given his special assent.

The contest brought the sense and sagacity of the Confederates to a sharp test. With a popular audience the extreme course is ordinarily the acceptable one. Even persons of staid judgment are apt to be dazzled

* To this suggestion Mr. Gavan Duffy replied:—"It has been maintained that the existing rules distinctly and intentionally leave us free to adopt all Mr. Mitchel's opinions. I am sorry, sir, that this line of argument has been adopted. It is not a frank or intrepid one; and it has no colour of evidence or probability to rest upon. The rule says that we purpose to obtain our end 'by the force of opinion, by the combination of all classes of Irishmen, and by the exercise of all the political, social, and moral influences within our reach.' Let me ask—can a proclamation that the union of classes is for ever hopeless be interpreted into relying on such a union? Are rifle clubs organs of a 'social or moral influence;' and does the force of opinion mean guerilla warfare? We are told guerilla war is not merely one method of redemption, but the 'true and only method;' and, moreover, that constitutional means are a humbug. Who will stand up and declare that these two sentiments are compatible with the rule in question?"

by strong counsels and audacious enterprizes. To make just allowance for impediments, to take into consideration the question of ways and means, to refuse assent to a daring project when you are only required to assent, not to act, is not a common virtue of the multitude. But the founders of the Confederation were confident that the rank and file, consisting of the young students, artisans, and shopkeepers of the capital, would exercise a sound judgment, and the result justified their confidence. The men who had created the party led the debate; they were all willing to set their lives on a cast for Ireland if the circumstances were such as their judgment and conscience approved of, but they rejected the amendment as fulfilling neither condition.

Doheny, afterwards one of the founders of the Fenian organisation, in the course of a long speech said:—

"When a man talks of arming, he should begin to act; and if he begins to act without weighing his means, and assuring himself of a probability, at least, of success, he must be surely mad. Resolutions to keep the peace, where there is no provocation to break it, are, God knows, silly and degrading; but resolutions about arms, without any intention of using them, are, in my mind, infinitely worse."

If it was suggested that there was such an intention, what were the chances of success? Let the people resist the collection of rate or rent in small or even in large numbers, armed with muskets and pitchforks, and they would lay their bodies on their native fields; or if they had a momentary success, deliver them to the

gibbet. The peasantry were not armed, but if they had arms why conceal the fact that the majority of them, guided by those they most trusted, would use them against the Confederation? To stimulate an immediate insurrection was a fatal policy and would lead to murder. Mr. Mitchel was far from seeing the thing in that light, but this would be the result.

Mr. Mitchel interposed with unusual fierceness. Mr. Doheny was misrepresenting him. The resistance to poor-rate which he had recommended was a passive resistance, not immediate insurrection. If Mr. Doheny could not understand plain language, then his line of argument was intelligible; if he could, he was grossly misrepresenting the facts for some clap-trap purpose.

Meagher, who afterwards fought with stubborn courage in a quarrel less dear to him, and who would have gone to battle for Ireland more joyfully than to a feast, refused to consent to a policy, which he considered rash and hopeless. Was an insurrection practicable? Prove to him it was, and he would vote for it that night. Men who affirmed that liberty was not worth one drop of blood were only fit for out-door relief; but his choice must not be dictated by preference, but by stern necessity. To an insurrectionary movement the priesthood were opposed, the middle classes were opposed, the aristocracy were opposed. To sustain their opposition 50,000 men were in occupation of the country. Had the class upon whom they were asked to rely power to dash aside these tremendous obstacles? No; without discipline, arms, or food, beggared, starved, and de-

moralised by the law, they had no such power. But it was said an immediate insurrection was not designed. If so, if they could not deal with the disease on the spot, what became of their objection against the policy of the Confederation as yielding no immediate result? Constitutional methods were alone fitted to the hour, but these methods Mr. Mitchel would forbid. No one supporting Mr. O'Brien denied that arms were among the legitimate resources of the people, but Mr. Mitchel declared that constitutional operations must be given up. This was the question they had to determine, and he was rejoiced that at length a uniform policy would be adopted, and all the vague talk with which their ears had been vexed of late would come to an end. The chief argument for abandoning a constitutional course was that the constituencies were corrupt and would not elect honest representatives. But this argument was fatal to their own theory; if the constituencies were perjurers and cowards on the hustings, would they be chevaliers within the trenches? Would the Thersites of the polling-booth be an Achilles in the bivouac? He desired that the policy of the Confederation might continue to be a national and not be changed to a democratic one—a movement not of one class, but of all the classes in the nation. They must work out the policy they had agreed upon. He knew of no nation which had won its independence by accident—they won only on a determined system.

"All this talk (he said) about a crisis is at hand—shouts of defiance—Louis Philippe is upwards of seventy—France remem-

bers Waterloo—the first gun fired in Europe—all this obscure babble—all this meaningless maundering—must be swept away. Ten thousand guns fired in Europe would announce no glad tidings to you if their lightning flashed upon you in a state of disorganisation and incertitude. Trust blindly to the future—wait for the tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, may lead to fortune—envelope yourselves in mist—leave everything to chance, and be assured of this, the most propitious opportunities will rise and pass away, leaving you still incompetent to decide—irresolute to act—powerless to achieve. This was the great error of the Repeal Association. From a labyrinth of difficulties there was no avenue opened to success. The people were kept within this labyrinth—they moved round and round—backwards and forwards—there was perpetual motion, but no advance. In this bewilderment are you content to wander until a sign appears in Heaven, and the mystery is disentangled by a miracle? Do you prefer to substitute a driftless superstition in place of a determined system—groping and fumbling after possibilities, instead of seizing the agencies within your reach? This, indeed, would be a blind renunciation of your powers, and thus, indeed, the virtue you prize so justly—the virtue of self-reliance—would be extinguished in you."

A young Protestant of the middle class * cited the language used by Mitchel when he became a Confederate, that only by a union embracing all sects and classes could a power be erected that would raise Ireland to a legitimate rank as a sovereign state; and added that it was plainly he who had changed his opinion, not the Confederation.

Mr. P. J. Smyth insisted that the new policy would not only alienate the gentry, but the most powerful social element of all, the middle class. Upon what class

* John Williams.

then was it proposed to rely? On the lowest of all. On men directly under the influences which impelled the mobs of Limerick, Kilkenny, and Belfast to deeds of violence. How could even this class be reached? With the upper and middle class in hostility, as well as the priesthood almost to a man, it would be impossible by speaking or writing to induce a single parish in Ireland to rise in insurrection. He was, therefore, in favour of a national policy in preference to a class movement, and he approved of constitutional measures, because they were the only ones available in the present circumstances of the country, and because honestly worked out they would be adequate to their end. If Ireland were united, then indeed she might strike a blow for the recovery of her freedom.

McGee, who had resigned his secretaryship, and was free to take an unembarrassed part in the debate, said he opposed the new policy, not because it was treason against the law, but because it was treason against common sense. If arms were the true type of opinion, Ireland was enslaved by opinion; opinion represented by Sir Edward Blakney with the *báton* of Commander-in-Chief in his hand. But not such was the opinion which had conquered the world. What was the fashion of Paul's sword or Peter's cuirass? In what sort of armour did Leo confront Attila? With how many legions did St. Augustine convert Africa to the faith? Mr. Mitchel denied that he was for immediate insurrection, but what did that denial mean? If the Lord-Lieutenant proclaimed a district and ordered the arms

to be given up, if they were not given up the police and military would be called out. Mr. Mitchel says, in such a case, the people must sell their lives as dearly as they can. This was immediate collision. Were the men so incited to resist to be left to their fate? Surely not; they must be supported, and this was immediate insurrection. The right to differ was pleaded in defence of these proposals. But there were principles respecting which there was no right to differ in that Confederation. "There was no right to differ on the necessity of Repeal—there was no right to differ on the non-place-begging policy—there was no right to differ on non-sectarian discussions—there was no right to differ on any of the fundamental rules." Mr. Mitchel contended that if his amendment were carried it would leave the Confederation unaltered; but the fact was not so; the clubs were paralysed, leading men were divided, and recruits were stopped till it was known what the Confederation meant and where it was going. There would be no progress till this question was determined; if you invited men to dine with Damocles, would they come? In our history the one problem which had engaged the constant meditation of Irish patriots was to combine classes, not to divide them.

"To combine classes Roger O'Moore embraced Preston, of Gormanstown, on the summit of Knocklofty, in 1641—to combine classes Sarsfield rode from Limerick town to Galway Garrison to bring back Tyrconnell—to combine classes Henry Grattan sent the resolution in favour of Emancipation to the Convention of Dungannon—to combine classes Wolfe Tone, a Protestant, became secretary to the Catholics of Ireland—to combine classes

O'Connell drank 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of William the Third'—to combine classes Thomas Davis thought, and laboured, and lived."

It is scarcely necessary to follow this debate into further detail. Devin Reilly supported Mitchel in a short unmethodic speech. He was not going to the hills, as some speakers suggested, but he meant to found rifle clubs. The people failed in '98 because they carried on their operations in secret, but the principles and policy he relied upon would be open to all.

O'Gorman observed that the advice contained in Mitchel's letter was regarded as mischievous by the majority of the Confederates; he believed it to be insane. It was the old national vice, impatience; suddenly abandoning one project to follow a newer. It was said constitutional agitation had failed, but in truth it never had a fair trial, honestly worked out. A cannon loaded to the muzzle was a type of this new policy—it would be more dangerous to its friends than to its enemies. Mr. Crean asked where were the arms to be had, which the people were directed to procure? It was wild to talk of buying arms for themselves, to men without the means of buying a loaf. Ross, of Bladensburg, illustrated the danger of preaching a separation of classes from recent foreign history. Austria stimulated the Polish peasants of Galacia to butcher the Polish nobility, and then trod both into common ruin. And Dillon cited from Wolfe Tone's memorial to the French Government the opinion of that skilful and experienced leader of men, that to raise a mere peasant

insurrection in Ireland would deliver up the people hopelessly to the British Government.

The Confederates had been trained in fair play and common sense, and they refused to be led away by class prejudices or blind impulse. They rejected the amendment by a sweeping majority.*

These were the men whom Lord John Russell described as promoting every species of violence and regarding social disturbance as their best weapon.

In judging this controversy, it is essential to remember that it arose before the French Revolution was foreseen. Europe was perfectly tranquil, England was at peace with the whole world, and Ireland was divided between a majority which believed vaguely in O'Connell's name

* Messrs. Mitchel and Reilly were named as tellers for the *Ayes*. Messrs. O'Gorman, jun., and M'Gee for the *Noes*.

After a considerable delay, the numbers were announced to be—

For the amendment	188
Against it	317
Majority	129

The announcement was received with well-suppressed emotion on both sides. The earnestness and dignity of the meeting were only interrupted by one ludicrous incident. A tall, ungainly-looking man, not known to half-a-dozen persons present, suddenly mounted the platform on the second day and demanded, Where was the man of the sword? (Meagher had not yet spoken.) He, for his part, was the man with the umbrella (which instrument he wielded in his right hand.) It was all a newspaper quarrel, he insisted, and ought to be so treated. This was Mr. John Fisher Murray. I infer from his tone that he supposed he had some personal wrong to avenge on me; I never had the slightest idea what it was, life being too full of work at that time for personal controversies. But Mr. Mitchel contradicted his suggestion in the *United Irishman*. "Mr. Duffy (he said) was perfectly right when he denied that the late differences in the Irish Confederation had originated in a 'newspaper dispute.' There was no newspaper dispute. The division of parties, both in the newspaper and in the Confederation, came out of one common source—a vital disagreement as to the true national policy of Ireland. We have no quarrel with Mr. Duffy (and sorely mistaken we believe him to be); know him too well to ascribe any mean or pecuniary motives to him."

and a minority who followed the Confederation. The policy of the best Nationalists was to reunite these two sections; the policy of the new Seceders was, in effect, to splinter off another fragment from the minority.

Which of us does not see now that their method never had a moment's chance of success? In morals not less than in mathematics there is an inevitable mensuration; and between the means and the end there yawned a precipice. You, reader, perchance, would rather it were otherwise—would rather these dreams had proved realities; but do not on that account shut your eyes to the fact that they were only dreams. To believe that a thing is possible because we wish it to happen is the perpetual root of failure and disaster. If an insurrection at that moment would have sufficed, a man had only to enter a cabin in Mayo or Donegal to confess that whatever turned that sty into a habitation fit for a civilised man would be a blessed message from on high.

Before the controversy Mitchel started a new journal, the *United Irishman*, written with great directness and vigour, chiefly by himself and Reilly. He wrote to Lalor inviting his assistance as a contributor. Lalor, who had endured the torture of seeing his darling conceptions distorted and attributed to another, while his own existence had faded from the public memory, was in bitter wrath, and peremptorily refused any assistance.*

* Mr. Luby is of opinion that a low rate of remuneration offered by Mitchel to Lalor was another ground of offence:—"Lalor ever after felt more or less embittered against John Mitchel. He seldom praised him cordially; would even sometimes speak slightingly of him as 'a bold, clever fellow,' and accuse him of appropriating his ideas. . . . To me, when I *now* look back at Mitchel's offer, I feel nothing short of downright astonishment.

Like an injured lover he demanded back his letters, and took no further part in Irish affairs while Mitchel remained in Ireland. When he came on the stage, as we shall see, it was to reclaim his own ideas and separate them carefully from whatever had been added or altered.

The result of the three days' debate left Mr. Mitchel profoundly discredited for judgment and capacity. He had not found among the most enthusiastic Confederates one man of mark to accept his theory or support his projects. To men outside the Confederation they appeared to be sheer insanity. Mr. John O'Connell's handful of adherents declared triumphantly that all the Liberator's fears were justified; the Young Irelanders had now thrown off the mask and were openly inciting the people to their ruin; some of them, with the alacrity to imagine the worst common to long oppressed communities, were ready to affirm that his plans were concocted in the Castle! Whether he would have made way in the end against these difficulties must remain for ever a matter of conjecture. Events on which he had not counted, which neither he nor his adversaries had in the least foreseen, intervened to give the controversy a new character.

Immediately after the debate in the Confederation, Waterford fell vacant. As a parliamentary party was an essential part of the Confederate plan, Meagher determined to contest his native city. Conciliation

However, it should be borne in mind, that he was on the point of embarking in a new and dubious enterprise, while his young family was large and his means limited."—Luby's "Recollections of 1848."

Hall sent down Patrick Costello as a candidate, a retired attorney who had held a professional sinecure during the former Whig administration, and Sir Henry Barron, a local Whig, who called himself a Repealer, stood on his own account.

Though Meagher's father treated him with constant indulgence, he was an immoveable Old Irelander, and would not pay the cost of an election, or give him any support or encouragement. In the end, indeed, he appealed to the electors to vote for Costello. Under these circumstances we resolved to invite our friends to supply funds for what was purely a national experiment, and they did so promptly. Meagher, during his canvass, reported progress day by day. After the first day he wrote to me :—

"Everything goes on splendidly. A glorious canvass to-day! All the people—emphatically *the people*—and the girls, and the women. My God! I can hardly believe my senses! If Sir Henry Barron will not stand, my return (I could almost swear to) is certain. O'Gorman and Dillon must be down on Sunday. Anything further to-morrow and you will hear of it. One thing is positive—Marat has been stabbed; Delahunty has been floored! Tell the Council all this."

A vivid and authentic picture of the election, though over-coloured, perhaps, with the pungent feelings of the hour, may be gathered from the private notes of Dillon to his wife, who watched the contest with a sympathy scarcely less lively than his own :—

"I never witnessed so great a triumph as we had yesterday at the nomination. Cuddihy, the friar, opened the ball by pro-

posing Costello. His speech was a tissue of the most brutal vituperation, directed against Meagher, Doheny, and Davis—the last of whom he called 'the base coward who ran away from the Monster meetings.' His attack upon Meagher was most scandalous; he repeatedly called him a traitor and a murderer. The whole audience, with the exception of some two dozen Old Irelanders, shouted, 'Down with him! put him out!' and the young tradesmen in the gallery clenched their fists at him. Meagher repeatedly interfered to get him a hearing, and succeeded with great difficulty. 'Oh,' he cried out, 'I will have hard work absolving the young men of Waterford after this day.' At this, Mr. O'Hara became perfectly furious, and shouted, 'Blasphemy! blasphemy!'* On the whole, a more disgusting exhibition was never witnessed. Barron's speech was short, tame, and commonplace. Costello displayed a good deal of low cunning, and abstained from abuse, except in regard to Doheny who seemed to be the common butt of them all; and who, I must say, came out of a very trying ordeal much raised in my estimation, from the fact that they were not able to mention a single circumstance to his discredit. Meagher spoke last, and made a magnificent speech. He scarcely noticed the attack upon himself, and directed himself mainly to the Conservatives, inviting them to throw themselves upon the honest enthusiasm of their own people, and reminding them of the part their fathers played in '82. You will see the speech, so I will say no more than that it was delivered with energy and dignity; and no small portion of its effect was owing to the contrast it exhibited to the vulgar virulence of his opponents. The few Old Irelanders literally hung their heads in shame, and repeatedly cried out that they 'had no resentment towards him.' And the Conservatives cheered him enthusiastically. Now, although we had this

* Mr. O'Hara was Mrs. Dillon's uncle and a very remarkable man. Under grey hairs he had the fire and vigour of youth, and he exercised in the private counsels of the party a notable influence. Lamartine's "History of the Girondists" was now a popular book, and it was the fashion of the day to find parallels for its heroes and notabilities among contemporary politicians; Mr. O'Hara among his intimates was called Dumourier.

great triumph, you must not suppose that the election is won. The issue still remains in doubt. A number of the Conservatives met yesterday and came to the conclusion of withholding their votes till twelve o'clock on Tuesday, and then supporting whichever of Barron or Meagher will be highest on the poll, so as to be sure to throw out Costello. They waited on us for the purpose of being released from their pledges, in order that they might be free to take this course, and we at once consented."

The election was not won, but an immense influence was produced upon opinion in the district, and from that time forth Waterford was a Confederate city.

The close of the Confederate debate left no one happy. Mr. Mitchel's theories proved to be gaseous, but the wrongs to be redressed were not only real but increasing fearfully. Fever had followed famine, as it commonly does, and in every considerable town the best men in the community, the zealous physician, the benevolent guardian, the pious clergyman, were its prey. In Galway one of the members of the county died of typhus, the same incident happened in Tipperary; in the north a similar fate befell Lord Lurgan, in the south the Mayor of Cork, and in the west the Catholic bishop of Clonfert. Half-a-dozen ministers of the Established Church, more than as many doctors, and three times as many Catholic priests fell victims to it.* Under the new system sanctioned by Parliament, 70,000 men were discharged from the public works in a batch,

* "In Galway," says the *Vindicator*, "the following gentlemen met at the late assizes in full health, and in the discharge of public duties. The first three were members of the grand jury, and they have all died within ten days of malignant typhus:—R. Gregory, J.P., Coole Park; T. B. Martin, M.P., J. Nolan, J.P., P. Dolphin, J.P., and S. Jones, R.M."

and 100,000 in a second batch. The remainder got notice to leave speedily. Agricultural employment was found only for a handful of this multitude, and deaths increased fearfully. The weekly returns of the dead were like the bulletin of a fierce campaign. As the end of the year approached, villages and rural districts, which had been prosperous and populous a year before, were desolate. In some places the loss amounted to half the resident population.* Even the paupers shut up and poor-houses did not escape. More than one in six perished of the unaccustomed food. The people did not everywhere consent to die patiently. In Armagh and Down groups of men went from house to house in the rural disticts and insisted on being fed. In Tipperary and Waterford corn-stores and bakers' shops were sacked. In Donegal the people seized upon a flour-mill and pillaged it. In Limerick 5,000 men assembled on Tory Hill, and declared that they would not starve. A local clergyman restrained them by the promise of speedy relief.† "If the Government did not act promptly, he himself would show them where food could be had." In a few cases crops were carried away from farms. The offences which spring from suffering and fear were heard of in many districts, but they were encountered

* "Last December North Ballarrard contained a population of 55; now there is not one. 'Ballinshohora contained 143 a few months since; the survivors are now under 50.' 'On the townland of Dromonstha, 54 have died out of 200.' 'In Dhelis, 60 have died out of a population of 90.' 'On the Meenies, 80 have died out of 260.' The population of East Schull six months ago was 8,000; it is now reduced to 6,000. The parish of Kilbequet had, a year since, a population of 7,000; it now has but 5,000, of whom 3,000 are in imminent danger of perishing of want."—*Cork Southern Reporter.*

† Rev. Jas. O'Shea.

with instant resistance. There were 30,000 men in red jackets, carefully fed, clothed, and lodged, ready to maintain the law. Four prisoners were convicted at the Galway assizes of stealing a filly, which they killed and ate to preserve their own lives. In Enniskillen two boys under twelve years of age were convicted of stealing one pint of Indian meal cooked into "stirabout," and Chief Justice Blackburn vindicated the outraged law by transporting them for seven years. Other children committed larcenies that they might be sent to gaol, where there was still daily bread to be had. In Mayo the people were eating carrion wherever it could be procured, and the coroner could not keep pace with the inquests; for the law sometimes spent more to ascertain the cause of a pauper's death than would have sufficed to preserve his life.

The social disorganisation was a spectacle as afflicting as the waste of life; it was the waste of whatever makes life worth possessing. All the institutions which civilise and elevate the people were disappearing one after another. The churches were half empty; the temperance reading-rooms were shut up; the mechanics' institute no longer got support; only the gaols and the poor-houses were crowded. A new generation, born in disease and reared in destitution, pithless and imbecile, threatened to drag down the nation to hopeless slavery. Trade was paralysed; no one bought anything which was not indispensable at the hour. The loss of the farmers in potatoes was estimated at more than twenty millions sterling, and with the potatoes the pigs which fed on them

disappeared. The seed procured at a high price in spring again failed; time, money, and labour were lost, and another year of famine was certain. All who depended on the farmer had sunk with him; shopkeepers were beggared, tradesmen were starving, the priests living on voluntary offerings were sometimes in fearful distress when the people had no longer anything to offer.

The poor-rate was quite inadequate to support the burden thrown upon it by the suspension of public works, but there was another claim upon it which could not wait. When the elections were over and the Government majority secure, the Treasury called on the poor-law guardians to levy immediately a special rate for the repayment of a million and a quarter lent by the State in a previous year. They were warned that if they refused their boards would be dissolved and the rates levied by the authority of the Commissioners. The guardians in many districts declared that an additional rate could not be collected. All that could be got would be too little to support the distressed class. But the Treasury would listen to no excuse, and a dozen boards were dissolved and paid guardians put in their place. The Treasury had lent seven millions sterling in 1846; five millions of it had been spent in making roads which were not needed or desired, and one million was diverted from the wages fund to purchase land for this experiment. The aid which the stronger country proposed to give to the weaker, from the Treasury to which both contributed, was the remission of one-third of this debt. A blunder

in Foreign Policy, the escapade of an ambitious Minister in India or Africa, has cost the British taxpayer more in a month than he spent to save millions of his fellow-subjects beyond the Irish Sea.

When the increased mortality was pressed on the attention of the Government, Lord John Russell replied that the owners of property in Ireland ought to support the poor born on their estates. It was a perfectly just proposition, if the ratepayers were empowered to determine the object and method of the expenditure; but prohibiting reproductive work, and forcing them to turn strong men into paupers, and keep them sweltering in workhouses instead of labouring to reclaim the waste lands—this was not justice. The *Times*, commenting on the new policy, declared that Ireland was as well able to help herself as France or Belgium, and that the whole earth was doing duty for inhuman Irish landlords. An unanswerable case, if Ireland, like France and Belgium, had the power of collecting and applying her own revenue; otherwise not difficult to answer.

The people fled before the famine to England, America, and the British colonies. They carried with them the seed of disease and death. In England a bishop and more than twenty priests died of typhus, caught in attendance on the sick and dying. The English people clamoured against such an infliction, which it cannot be denied would be altogether intolerable if these fugitives were not made exiles and paupers by English law. They were ordered home again, that they might be supported on the resources of their own

country; for though we had no country for the purpose of self-government and self-protection, we were acknowledged to have a country when the necessity of bearing burdens arose.

More than a hundred thousand souls fled to the United States and Canada. The United States maintained sanitary regulations on shipboard which were effectual to a certain extent. But the emigration to Canada was left to the individual greed of ship-owners, and the emigrant ships rivalled the cabins of Mayo or the fever sheds of Skibbereen. Crowded and filthy, carrying double the legal number of passengers, who were ill-fed and imperfectly clothed, and having no doctor on board, the holds, says an eye-witness, were like the Black Hole of Calcutta, and deaths occurred in myriads. The survivors, on their arrival in the new country, continued to die and to scatter death around them. At Montreal, during nine weeks, eight hundred emigrants perished, and over nine hundred residents died of diseases caught from emigrants. During six months the deaths of the new arrivals exceeded three thousand. No preparations were made by the British Government for the reception, or the employment, of these helpless multitudes. The *Times* pronounced the neglect to be an eternal disgrace to the British name. Ships carrying German emigrants and English emigrants arrived in Canada at the same time in a perfectly healthy state.* The Chief Secretary for

* "The ships containing the German emigrants, and two ships fitted out by the Duke of Sutherland from Sutherlandshire, arrived in Canada in a perfectly healthy state."—(Sir Charles Trevelyan's "Irish Crisis.")

Ireland was able to inform the House of Commons that of a hundred thousand Irishmen who fled to Canada in a year 6,100 perished on the voyage, 4,100 on their arrival, 5,200 in the hospitals, and 1,900 in the towns to which they repaired. The Emigrant Society of Montreal paints the result during the whole period of the famine, in language not easily to be forgotten.

"From Grosse Island up to Port Sarnia, along the borders of our great river, on the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie, wherever the tide of emigration has extended, are to be found one unbroken chain of graves, where repose fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, in a commingled heap, no stone marking the spot. Twenty thousand and upwards have gone down to their graves!"

This was the fate which was befalling our race at home and abroad as the year '47 closed. There were not many of us who would not have given his life cheerfully to arrest this ruin, if only he could see a possible way; but there was no way visible.

"On the other hand, ten vessels arrived at Montreal in one month carrying Irish emigrants, four thousand four hundred and thirty-seven in all. Of these, eight hundred and four had died on their passage, and eight hundred and forty-seven were seriously diseased. The "Larch," from Sligo, carried four hundred and forty passengers, of whom a hundred and eight died, and a hundred and fifty were seriously diseased. The "Virginia" sailed with five hundred and ninety-six passengers, of whom one hundred and fifty died at sea, and one hundred and eighty-six were disabled by disease."—*Montreal Herald.*

Book III.

CHAPTER I.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

Upon this sullen calm burst the tremendous tidings that Paris was in open insurrection, that Louis Philippe had fled in disguise, and a Provisional Government was sitting in the Hotel de Ville. The first touch of revolution had transformed the modern Ulysses into a British tourist, as peremptorily as the touch of Harlequin's wand turns some wicked old king into a lean and slippered Pantaloon. Another post brought the proclamation of a Republic. And the new rulers, how worthy they seemed to rule. Some of us can recall the enthusiasm they excited throughout the world. To the young, it might well seem that the poet who posed so picturesquely in the front of the new revolution, and was hailed by other men of genius as "first actor in the world's first scene,"* was destined to become a better Napoleon, the Napoleon of the Peoples, crowned with a nimbus which would outshine the laurel and purple of his predecessor. With what intoxication of hope they saw intellect seated in the *fauteuils* of authority. Arago, with a

* Walter Savage Landor.

name known almost as widely as the solar system which he interpreted to mankind, and a boy philosopher sitting in the Luxembourg among a ring of bloused Paladins, and by his side Albert the Workman, at whose name labour lifted up eyes in which gleamed the hope of marvellous changes soon to come. But the most propitious omen for Ireland was the presence among these rulers of a great nation, of the orator, who, four years before, had proffered her skilled brains and strong arms in her contest with England. The interest of the situation was intensified when it came to be noted that the conflict had arisen from circumstances identical with those which existed in Ireland in '43. The French people declared at repeated public demonstrations their desire for parliamentary reform; the Government were deaf to their wishes; a banquet in Paris, the last of the demonstrations, as Clontarf was the last of the monster meetings, was forbidden by proclamation; but the people of Paris, who would not yield the right of public meeting, rose and overturned the oppressive Government. And the triumphant insurgents seemed to be as magnanimous as they were valiant. No man lost his life for a political offence, private property was as secure as when the streets swarmed with sergeants-de-ville, and even the property of the State, in which every one might deem himself to have a share, was safe under the guardianship of the people. To young eyes the new commonwealth looked like a better Utopia, the golden age of human liberty and progress. If this grand spectacle in the end passed away like some panorama of dazzling palaces and gardens

seen for a moment in the clouds, it seemed at that day to be framed for a century of success, and an eternity of fame.

The news reached Dublin on the eve of a Confederate meeting, but the principal Confederates had not yet returned from the Waterford election. That it would be joyfully received was certain, but there was great impatience to know how it would be treated in relation to the hopes of Ireland. In rejecting the Lalor-Mitchel policy the Young Irelanders professed themselves ready to stake life and fortune in the contest whenever a fair chance offered, and here surely was a marvellous chance. With the wail of the famishing people in their ears, the news of a powerful oppressor defeated and hunted from his possessions by the wrath of the multitude, sounded like a message from heaven.

The chairman of the day was Lord Wallscourt, the son of a Union peer, who would gladly have reversed the transaction for which his family was ennobled. He was a man of good capacity and generous disposition, and though a peer was a democrat. On the continent he had become impressed with some of the theories, then much debated, for lifting the labourer into the position of a partner with the capitalist, and was understood to have applied this principle of partnership to the cultivation of his estate. He had never before, he declared, attended a public meeting, but he joined the Confederation because it started with the practice of taking no money from the poor. He welcomed the new revolution in the confident belief that it would help the industrious

man to get a fair share of his own produce; and he trusted Ireland would follow the example of France in organising labour. All other questions were of secondary interest.

I had always avoided the platform when it was possible, having a repugnance to the hysterics of popular oratory. But on this occasion I stood nearly alone, and needs must speak or leave the Confederation without a spokesman. The event which had just occurred stirred the whole world; it would assuredly stir the Irish people profoundly, for their sympathy with France was intense. They would see in the rise of the new Republic the opportunity for which they had longed, and if it were wasted the living generation would never be induced to hope for another. But to turn it to account the people must forget their differences; if they did, it would in sober truth furnish the opportunity they desired, for there is an electricity in revolution which turns the dullest metal into a flaming mass. I spoke in this sense. In the late controversy the Council had exhorted the Confederates to be patient, and promised that Ireland's opportunity would assuredly come. They had been patient and bided their time, "and now I for one (I said) proclaim that the time is at hand." The meeting by vehement assent adopted this sentiment. To use the opportunity effectually I warned them that differences among Nationalists must cease. Old and Young Ireland had something to pardon each other; let them begin the better time by making haste to exchange forgiveness. Those who had stood apart from both in

apathy or despair would unite with them if they united with each other.

Michael Crean appealed to his class to be the first to set an example of magnanimity, and P. J. Smyth, who had not yet discovered his great gift of oratory, briefly advocated the same course.* Dillon, who arrived from Waterford before the proceedings closed, said he would recommend no particular action, because the citizens ought to be allowed the initiative; but the time for action had come.†

In the *Nation*, following the meeting, the same key was struck, but more distinctly, as there I committed no one but myself:—

"Ireland's opportunity—thank God, and France—has come at last! Its challenge rings in our ears like a call to battle, and warms our blood like wine. It demands of us what mission we have to entrust to its ministry, so often and so fervently evoked. We must answer if we would not be slaves for ever. We must unite, we must act, we must leap all barriers but those which are Divine; if needs be, we must die, rather than let this providential hour pass over us unliberated."

What we desired was another and better Eighty-two.

"What do the people want? An Irish Parliament, a native Privy Council, an Irish flag, a national guard, social security and

* "I heartily concur in the prayer that has been offered up by Mr. Duffy, that from henceforth all differences between Repealers may cease, and that all Irishmen, of every class and creed and party, may now combine in one great effort to establish another '82."—P. J. Smyth.

† Lord Wallscourt had quite divested himself of class prejudices, and we had hopes, for a time, that he would go all lengths with the Confederation, but he answered that he had been a soldier, and that he was persuaded when it came to blows "undisciplined peasants could never be got to stand shoulder to shoulder."

protection, and the control of all offices, taxes, and public institutions in their own country; the rule and sovereignty of this Irish land."

It was no inordinate claim on behalf of an ancient nation, for more than a dozen British colonies have since attained a larger measure of self-government; and we desired that it might be won, if possible, with the concurrence of all classes of Irishmen; but won it ought to be at any price which might be needful.

"We do not hold, we have never held, that the royal robe of liberty must be purpled by blood. Constitutions presented on the points of swords often retain the marks of the conflict in which they were won, and the steel sometimes has rent the parchment. We had rather see Dublin streets filled with rejoicing living men than with canals of blood—even though it were the blood of our oppressors. But if no other way is left us out of famine, bankruptcy, and disgrace than such a struggle—then, may God give us the 'vantage ground and the victory."

When the Confederate leaders met, they had to consider whether they would face revolution not under some ideal conditions, or at some propitious era, but in the current year.* They agreed that they stood pledged to fight for our national rights on any reasonable opportunity, and that with all Europe on fire for liberty the opportunity had come. The men who, a few weeks before, had fearlessly resisted anarchy, now as fearlessly embraced revolution. They were convinced that there

* Just before the Secession, MacNevin disappeared from the public view for ever; just before the French Revolution he was carried to his grave.

was a *casus belli*, for which they might stake their lives with unblemished honour and clear conscience. The wealthy and powerful nation with which we were united, which comptrolled our revenue and resources at discretion, had pronounced our doom. It was better, they declared, that two millions of Irish men and women should perish than that any embarrassing demand should be made on British resources. It was better they should perish than that we should be permitted to save ourselves by resuming the management of our own affairs. Our fellow-subjects had seen without shame the Irish begging alms at the door of every civilised nation in the world, and they could see them die without succour. To break away from such a connection was a right and a duty. Grattan, who lies buried in Westminster Abbey, declared that if the Irish Constitution was incompatible with the British Empire, his choice would be—perish the Empire, live the Constitution. With how much more reason might men in our position say: If the British connection be incompatible with the lives of the Irish people—perish the connection, live the people.

But with a moderation and sobriety which deserve the respect of thoughtful men, they determined to make a last effort to obtain a native Parliament by negotiation, with the understanding that they would prepare from that hour for the other alternative.

The chances of success we knew were not great, but they were too great to throw away, when they were the last resource of our race. At worst, we were per-

suaded that the position of a people who had fought for their just rights and failed, would be better, then and thereafter, than that of a people who had basely lain down and died. The circumstances of the time were not wholly unfavourable to such an attempt. The Catholic Church in Ireland began to thrill under an impulse which might propel it far beyond the comptrol of the Peace Resolutions. Mankind are so constituted that our most cherished convictions become dearer if they are professed by persons whom we venerate; and at this time Pius IX. still seemed the appointed leader of the nations striving for freedom. His grave, circumspect admonitions moved men's breasts more than the passionate oratory of Ventura. In France, Lacordaire was still the ideal orator of popular liberty; and in Hungary, the primate of the Catholic Church already shared the counsels of Kossuth. In England, domestic difficulties were arising which, through the magnifying glasses of our strong desire, looked formidable. The Chartists, counted by millions, were threatening a revolution, and their threat was not to be altogether disdained, for nine years earlier they had appeared in arms against the Crown. They had substantial wrongs to redress, and as Parliament held out no hope of remedying them, an angry and dangerous feeling was general among the industrious classes. Ever since '43 soldiers had been correspondents of the *Nation*, and we knew that the Irish heart was not dead under the scarlet jacket. Nearly half the British army was Irish, and if we held our ground for a time it was reasonably probable that

they would fly to the national flag—as Scotch regiments had left the camp of Charles I. to join the Covenanters, as Hungarian regiments afterwards left the flag of Austria to serve with their country. The constabulary were peasants' sons, and discipline would scarcely control instinct after one great success was won for the national cause. The allegiance of freemen is always conditional; the allegiance of the most loyal Englishmen to the Queen depends on her governing according to law. A soldier's duty is stricter than a civilian's; but even a soldier's submission is not without legitimate limits. He, too, in a great extremity, must discriminate between conflicting claims; for a soldier indifferent to the justice of his cause is, in the language of a competent authority, "a mere murderer, hired to slay and be slain." *

A reunion of the whole body of Nationalists under one flag, as in '43, was a necessary preliminary to any successful action; but at the moment it seemed a feasible task, for men were outbidding each other in professions of readiness to forget all causes of offence. We desired that there should be peace with the right wing of the party and with the left. From Old Ireland we expected little more than neutrality, but neutrality at such a moment meant so much. The glory of an historic name hovered over the old Association like the light that lingers in the sky when the sun has set; it was fading fast indeed, but it might outlive the opportunity on which we counted. From the left, we expected that they would be brought under some

* Sir William Napier's Correspondence.

discipline, and subjected to the control of practical sense, instead of proclaiming their power and resources for immediate insurrection in terms which were the despair of men who had mastered the multiplication table. Union was a *sine qua non*. If men would not begin the contest for their rights by conquering their own prejudices, they were foredoomed. The moral of the late revolution was this: a half-armed population succeeded against a disciplined soldiery because they had on their side the passionate sympathy of the whole nation. And it was a presage of success in composing difficulties, to remember that popular enthusiasm had replaced in France worse division and distrust than existed in Ireland at present.*

Sir Colman O'Loghlen and Dr. Gray undertook to arrange the bases of a reconciliation with the old Repealers; not with a view to revolution, to which neither of them was at any time committed, but that the national party might be strong enough to negotiate with England. O'Brien, we knew, believed that if the gentry joined us England must capitulate; and he was still persuaded, from confidential intercourse, that they would join us if they were not frightened away by extreme opinions. Dillon and Meagher concurred with me in thinking that we were bound in honour to give this experiment fair play; but that, with the gentry

* It was only a few years since Lamartine had written of the people of France:—"May Heaven regenerate men, for our politics are a disgrace to us, and make angels weep. Destiny gives an hour in a century to humanity to regenerate itself; this hour is a revolution, and men lose it by tearing each other in pieces; they give to vengeance the hour assigned by God for regeneration and advancement."

or without them, we must not allow the opportunity to escape us.

O'Brien was absent; and with the delicacy which he pushed to a weakness and a fault he again refrained from intervening till his colleagues had made up their minds. He was resolved not to domineer, but he sometimes fell into the opposite error of not exercising his legitimate authority. The second meeting of the Confederation since the flight of Louis Philippe was about to be held, and we were uncertain whether he would be present.*

By the agency of Dillon mainly, a Citizen's Committee was formed, in which all classes of Nationalists were fairly represented. Its first work was to address cordial congratulations to the French people. The Dublin Corporation, by a majority in the proportion of

* More than one of us urged his immediate return to Dublin. "Every soul here desires to see you in Dublin. The Old Irelanders seem ripe for reconciliation. Stritch has just been here; he will act with us in the matter. The Trades are organising a movement, and Dillon, O'Hara, and I are trying to draw the middle classes into it. Events march on at such a pace that every hour produces something. . . . Mitchel means (I am told by Dillon) to declare for a Republic in his paper to-morrow. There will be an outburst sooner or later, be sure of that. But unless you provide against it it will be a mere democratic one, which the English Government will extinguish in blood. Or if, by a miracle, it succeeds, it will mean death and exile to the middle as well as the upper classes. As Ireland lies under my eye now I see but one safety for her—a *union* of the Old and Young Irelanders, an arraying of the middle class in the front of the millions, and a peaceful revolution, attained by watching and seizing our opportunity. By peaceful, I mean without unnecessary or anarchical bloodshed. It *may* be won without a shot being fired. But trust me, if there is no such junction, and if things are let to take the course they are tending towards, we will see the life of the country trampled out under the feet of English soldiers, suppressing a peasant insurrection; or you and I will meet on a Jacobin scaffold, ordered for execution as enemies of some new Marat or Robespierre, Mr. James Lalor or Mr. Somebody else. It is the fixed and inevitable course of revolutions when the strength of the middle classes is permitted to waste in inaction."—Cahirmoyle Correspondence. Duffy to O'Brien.

eight to one, adopted a similar address, supported by Young and Old Irelanders. Maurice O'Connell, in language which would have dismayed Conciliation Hall a little earlier, warned the English Government to prepare for a surrender :—

"Let us hope that this triumph will further show to the rulers of nations that wise and timely concession can alone give them permanent security; and that hereafter no government will be sufficiently insane to urge constitutional opposition into armed resistance, and to absolve nations from their allegiance by compelling them to self-defence."

In the great towns of Leinster and Munster meetings of United Repealers were held, in which the local leaders, in the language of the day, "fraternized." They declared, at a remarkable assembly at Kilkenny, that they would remember no personal wrong of a date earlier than the three great days of February; and that of all public duties the most urgent was the duty of union. "Organising, arming, dying for the good cause of which men spoke so freely were altogether secondary and subordinate to the duty of massing the forces of the nation hitherto broken and distracted."

The news from a distance was encouraging. Lord John Russell, who had an income tax in preparation for Ireland when Louis Philippe fled, dropped it of a sudden; his agent in Italy, Lord Minto, was authorised to interpose between the Sicilians in arms for liberty and the King of Naples to secure them a constitution equivalent to the Irish constitution of Eighty-two. There

were popular riots in London, Manchester, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, plainly springing from the impulse given to democracy in Paris—meetings which at the time looked formidable, though in the end they proved mainly anarchical. But the class who do not riot—the staid and cautious—were beginning to admit that great changes were inevitable.

The second meeting of the Confederation* was held after a careful conference between the leaders. The tone adopted was frank and practical. It rested with the Government to make such a peaceful settlement between the two nations as they were striving to make between Sicily and Naples, but the time for a settlement, it was declared, had come, and could be no longer postponed, whatever agencies might be necessary to accomplish it.

Dillon read an address from the Council to the people. Union was the indispensable preliminary to the fulfilment of their hopes. The French Republic had declared that when the hour for the reconstruction of an oppressed nationality should appear to have sounded in the decrees of Providence she would arm for the protection of such a legitimate undertaking. There were three long oppressed nationalities, Poland, Italy, and Ireland. Italy had started to her feet; the bleeding breast of Poland heaved with returning life; should Ireland alone remain buried in darkness? Whenever falsehood, selfishness, and cowardice were cast aside; when courage, self-sacrifice, and mutual affection marked

* Reported in the *Nation* of the 11th of March, 1848.

the conduct of the people, Ireland would be entitled to call on the protectress of oppressed nationalities to redeem her pledge. When would this hour sound? Whether in a month, a year, or never, depended on the people themselves.

Smith O'Brien, who arrived unexpectedly from London, came, he said, to share the hopes of the country—hopes nourished by the condition of the world. In Italy, the venerable Pontiff at the head of the Catholic Church led by the hand the oppressed people. The Sicilians had for chiefs their native aristocracy, for it was only in Ireland that the aristocracy seemed afraid to vindicate their liberties. In France, the soldiery had done what the Irish soldiers would do under similar circumstances—fraternized with the people. He was ready, if his countrymen desired it, to go to Paris to invoke French sympathy in their behalf. The English ministry had an agent in Sicily negotiating the repeal of the union between that island and the kingdom of Naples; why should not the Irish people send a missionary to claim the assistance of a third power in support of a people who were contending for the repeal of another Union? He believed the time for Ireland's liberation was come: on one condition, that disunion was at an end. In Parliament their wishes were still treated with contempt; they must help themselves, and the gentry must determine whether they would be for the people or against them.

But it was not enough to ask the interference of foreign friends if our own duty was forgotten. And

O'Gorman stated specifically the new obligations which had arisen with the new opportunity :—

"When I last addressed this Confederation I opposed a proposition which I thought premature. Since then a startling change has taken place in the aspect of our affairs, and with that change my opinions have kept pace. It is my conviction that all honest men in this country are now bound to arm. . . Some months ago an alien flag floated over the ramparts of Palermo. The desponding peasant looked on whilst the ships of the stranger bore away the produce of his fertile soil. But to-day no strange ensign is hoisted on these towers—the flag of the stranger was torn down, and the national banner is raised in its stead."

When the private deliberations of the party were made known to O'Brien, he urged patience. Precipitation would ruin the opportunity, for it was certain the middle-class would not be hurried away by popular passion. No one was surprised at this advice, or misunderstood it. He was a man who only promised after deliberation, and with many conditions and qualifications—a demeanour which, on the platform, often tried the temper and fidelity of a people accustomed to profuse assurances, and who have an unhealthy appetite for that sort of food; but his associates knew that he would keep his word to the letter. He advanced slowly and tentatively, but he never made a backward step. An opinion which he accepted became part of his being, as inseparable from him as a function of his nature. It was now certain that he would risk all on turning the opportunity to account. Dillon's gifts made him rather a statesman than an orator, and he must

rank higher for what he did and projected, than for anything he has said or written. He had consummate good sense and a constant resolution to be just, which kept his enthusiasm within legitimate limits, and he was alive to the invaluable maxim that in public undertakings nothing ought to be left to chance for which forethought can provide. There was no man of military training amongst us, and it seemed plain that we might as reasonably propose to lay down a railway without an engineer, or conduct a suit in Chancery without a lawyer, as to proceed in the business we had in view without the aid of skilled soldiers. There were Irish soldiers in France and America, whom it was proposed to communicate with immediately. Money was also essential; without money, arms or military stores could not be collected, and an insurrection which levied its commissariat without paying for it, would find itself starved after the first week. It was necessary not only to make liberal sacrifices at home, but by prompt negotiation with our kinsmen in America to collect the indispensable pay chest.

Dillon proposed that we should have a consultation with Mitchel, and agree on a common course. But we found our late colleague metamorphosed in a marvellous manner. Since the French revolution his popularity had become prodigious. To the confiding multitude, that opportune transaction seemed to be in some way his individual work. The boldness with which he threatened and assailed the Government in the *United Irishman* delighted the people; and his reputation grew with

a rapidity only known in revolutions, and was swollen by the most amazing myths. His newly-found policy was represented to the clubs as long-cherished convictions which he had not been at liberty to expound in the *Nation*. His wayward opinions as fast as they were emitted became the creed of a considerable following—the most extravagant paradoxes as readily as reasonable suggestions, for a cloud of railway smoke casts as heavy a shadow as Sleivenamon. His latest profession on any subject was set up as a sort of eternal standard of right, from which deviation was shameful. Not to agree with him was a sin which needed no further description. The effect of this intoxicating popular incense on Mitchel's character was very injurious —from being modest and taciturn, he became dogmatic and arrogant. And he was tormented, I make no doubt, by the unspoken conviction that the incense ought to have been burned on another shrine. But the name of James Fintan Lalor was never heard on his lips, and never flowed from his pen.

Deliberation or counsel was hopeless in such a case. After a long conference, we were driven to the conclusion that there was no ground common to us three. Dillon and I thought that O'Brien should be encouraged to work out his theory: that the middle and upper class ought to be induced, if it were possible, to make such a movement for Legislative Independence as England, in the condition of Europe at the moment, would find it difficult to resist; but that we should prepare for the alternative of her resisting it, by immediate negotiation

with our countrymen and sympathisers in France and America, and by organising the rural population; and that a conflict ought not to be provoked till the harvest, which would feed the people, had ripened. Mitchel, and, still more, Reilly, by whom he was accompanied, was contemptuous of every expedient but stimulating the popular feeling. Preparation, pre-concert, a military leader, a plan—all these were idle and dilatory; the mine was ready to explode; let it explode. Were not Paris, Berlin, and Vienna sufficient evidence of what a spontaneous rising could effect? As for Legislative Independence, its day was gone by; Ireland must have a Republic and nothing else. The policy rejected by the Confederation three months earlier was spoken of as a scheme which time had justified, and which must be now worked out. We reminded him that in these continental cities the population had long been organised and armed by secret societies; but that the Confederates had neither arms nor ammunition. What was needed was time to supply this deficiency. The French revolutions had indeed altogether changed the conditions and chances of the contest; but we still regarded his original policy as everyone would have regarded it had there been no French revolution; and his present scheme was, to our thinking, as visionary and impracticable as the first. Popular enthusiasm is, no doubt, the primary element in revolution; but mere enthusiasm explodes, like powder, in smoke. Method is like the cold steel, silent and sure; and method was what he altogether rejected. No other scheme, he declared, pro-

mised any results. But did his scheme promise results? It ran its brief, brilliant career for two or three months; and nothing that preceded it in Irish affairs, nothing which has followed it, failed more consummately.

This amazing theory of revolution was faithfully represented in the *United Irishman.** The Executive, sitting in the Castle, were warned weekly that it was a death-struggle between them and the Mitchelite party, for apparently there was no other party worth counting. They were assured in specific terms that if they could not forthwith crush these determined assailants, they would be crushed by them. They were invited and dared to try the experiment. Let them prosecute and attempt to obtain verdicts by packed juries; jurors would no longer consent to do their bidding. And if they failed—failed to convict men who spoke and acted naked treason—their reign was over, and they might prepare to abandon the country. "Pack away," Mitchel wrote to the Lord-Lieutenant, to whom most of his confidences were addressed; "pack away, then, *if you can.* I expect no justice, no courtesy, no indulgence from you; and if you get me within your power I entreat you to show me no mercy, as I, so help me God, would show none to you." There was no conspiracy, the same personage was assured—no secret plot; he would

* The first number of the *United Irishman* appeared on the 12th of February, 1848, ten days before the French revolution commenced. That event was announced in the fourth number. The motto was from Wolfe Tone: "Our Independence must be had at all hazards. If the men of property will not support us, they must fall; we can support ourselves by the aid of that numerous and respectable class of the community, the men of no property." The last number appeared on the 27th of May. It existed between three and four months.

state his intentions weekly in the newspaper without reserve, and if it would convenience his Excellency he would consent to entertain a detective in his office, who could make daily reports to the Castle, for there was nothing to conceal and nothing to betray. Nor was there any selected leader. "The man who would lead Ireland to freedom and glory might be found walking the silent streets, his elbows out of his coat, and without his dinner." The public wrath and indignation would suffice alone, at the first signal, to sweep British authority out of the island.

Examined by the light of practical sense, nothing more wildly hopeless than this scheme can be found among the extravaganzas of political literature. No secrecy meant no preparation, and no leader would certainly end in meaning no fight. He misjudged the state of mind among the Castle jurors as completely as he had misjudged the state of mind among the peasantry. No peasant ever fired a shot in answer to his incentives to an agrarian war; not one of his associates, who put faith in this theory of public opinion, ever found a Castle jury to acquit him, or even a solitary juror to retard his conviction.*

The root of Mitchel's error was that he pushed

* An Ulster Confederate, who wanted to have the meaning and purpose of this strange policy interpreted to him, applied to Mr. Martin, and received this answer:—"To your question respecting the 'real danger of an outbreak.' I answer that neither I, nor Mr. Mitchel, nor any Confederate, has any political secret. I not only am completely ignorant of any plot or any secret proceeding among Repealers, but I firmly believe there is nothing of the kind. The *United Irishman* weekly gives the sentiments of its writers in the frankest manner. 'We all endeavour to say exactly what we think and what we intend."—Private letter of John Martin to Z. Wallace, editor of the *Anglo-Celt.*

to its extreme limits a theory of Carlyle's—that a revolution is necessarily as spontaneous and as ungovernable as a movement of nature. The theory lends itself pleasantly to poetry and rhetoric, but for any practical purpose no idea can well be more groundless. When the student of history follows in the train of some spontaneous uprising of the people, he discovers the precise place where it originated and the identical men who projected it. The Insurrection of Women, and the September massacre, which in Carlyle's brilliant romance spring like thunder out of a sunny sky, unexpected and unpredicted, were as much the result of a secret conspiracy as the Rye House Plot. The latest illustration is furnished by the marvellous victories of Garibaldi in Sicily and Naples, which we now know were easy because Cavour had secretly prepared the way by bribes and diplomacy.

But if his policy had been the perfection of human wisdom, he did not give it a chance of success, for he rendered it impossible that the Government could evade coming to an immediate issue; and for an immediate issue neither he nor any one was prepared.

Tone worked for eight years with the United Irishmen before he struck; Davis prepared with care and patience for a distant future; but the separate career of Mitchel is counted by weeks. The maxim of Montesquieu, applicable to the entire range of human affairs, is peculiarly true of movements in which a whole people must engage: "success for the most part depends upon

knowing how much time is necessary in order to succeed." *

From this time forth the Constitution of '82 was covered with ridicule and scorn in articles and speeches by Mr. Mitchel and those who agreed with him. Persons willing to accept that sham were little better than idiots or impostors; men of sense must have a Republic. It was not many weeks, as we have seen, since he taught widely different opinions in the *Nation*, and he knew that his late colleagues had not changed their minds. To take up this ground contributed to render O'Brien's experiment hopeless, and was justified by no compensating advantage. It did not win adherents to the national cause. To the mass of the people a Republic was but a name, and those who understood its significance might well doubt if it was an experiment fit to be made among the most clannish race in Europe. What was certain was that it alienated our best allies; for men of brains and culture, to whom a commonwealth of sober-minded citizens was the highest ideal of human government, would scarcely desire to place their country under a democracy of untutored peasants.

Loyalty, in the sense of devotion to the person of the sovereign, was little known in Ireland. But there were many thoughtful men acquainted with the working of the American system, who considered that Parliamentary Government, with a chief magistrate who is not the result of intrigue or the nominee of a majority,

* "Le succès de la plus part dépend de savoir combien il faut de temps pour réussir."—*Montesquieu.*

furnished a better security for ordered liberty than a Republic, where the president is sometimes the puppet of a ring of wire-pullers. None of the Confederate leaders supported the proposal; they thought it folly to dispute about the form of self-government when they were still in pursuit of the essential fact, and supreme folly to divide the national party on any speculative question.* If Ireland could win her liberty, she would still have to encounter the same practical difficulties in establishing a Republic, which had rendered the attempt in Belgium impossible. In later years leaders of other nationalities in kindred circumstances have taken the same course as the Confederate leaders in Ireland. Kossuth declared his country was dearer to him than theories of government, and he was ready to accept a king as the price of liberty for Hungary; and Mazzini, the apostle of Republicanism, was ready to accept a king as the price of unity for Italy.†

It is time to turn to the Government, and consider

* It may be useful to statesmen to know, when the relations between England and Ireland become the subject of fresh legislation (as assuredly they will) the genuine moderation which prevailed among the men who were regarded in England as levellers and incendiaries. O'Brien thought at that time, and after his long exile and imprisonment continued to think, that a Constitution like that of Eighty-two, not Separation, would be the best solution of the Irish difficulty. O'Gorman believed that Ireland, considering her inferiority in size, population, and resources, could not maintain herself in a hostile position to Great Britain, but that the interest of both pointed to a union under the same crown, with separate legislatures. Meagher was of the same opinion. In Richmond prison he wrote a confession of faith (with a view to a future memoir) entirely in this spirit.

† "Though I hate the word 'king' (and it would be strange if, after all we have suffered at the hands of kings, I did not hate it!) I am prepared to accept a king, should it be demanded as the price of our independence that we should elect a king."—"Memoirs of My Exile," Kossuth's Instructions, p. 98.

"If Italy wishes to become a monarchy under the sceptre of the

their policy and precautions at this era. The death of Lord Bessborough had left the Lord-Lieutenantcy vacant early in '47, and in the May of that year Lord Clarendon was sent over to take possession of it. At the moment there was nothing to trouble his serenity but the famine, and he commenced to study the country at leisure, it was said, in jolly nocturnal sederunts, resembling the Tobacco Parliament of Frederick of Prussia. Among a ring of convivial counsellors he smoked, and swallowed official experience, to the small hours. His training in public business had been acquired in various subordinate employments in Ireland and Spain, for he only reached political office when he became a peer, by the death of his uncle a few years before his Irish Viceroyalty; and his good-natured friends affirmed that his intellect was ruined by a long apprenticeship to the petty arts of diplomacy, and his nerves shattered by eternal tobacco. He was fit enough, however, for his post—which, in quiet times, might be filled by a lay figure—till the French revolution disturbed his tranquillity.

The plain speaking of the Confederation, and the direct challenge of Mr. Mitchel, were incidents for which his diplomatic experience furnished no precedent. He was naturally persuaded that an invitation to an immediate conflict would only be made by men who had carefully prepared for it, and he became anxious and

House of Savoy, let her; and if, after being freed from foreign rule, she wishes to hail the King or Cavour as liberator, or I know not what, let her do so. What all of us want now is, that Italy should be created (*che l'Italia si faccia*)."—*Storia Documentata della Diplomiza Europia in Italia dal* 1814 *al* 1861.

alarmed. Ample precautions had been taken under the direction of the Duke of Wellington. Every town had its garrison or its military station, and Dublin was occupied by an army of twelve thousand soldiers and constabulary. The soldiers were distributed in strategic positions, in the Royal Barracks, the Portobello Barracks, and in the Royal Military Hospital. But he was not content. He placed troops in the University, the old Parliament House, the Post Office, and the Custom House; and invited the striplings of Trinity College, the elderly antiquaries of the Royal Dublin Society, and the clerks in the Bank of Ireland to arm themselves. Men who were close to him during the period admit that he lost his head, and that his nerves were in a condition of diseased sensibility.* He insisted upon getting the loyal population into military array. By the agency of Colonel Kennedy, the northern Orangemen were supplied with arms, and induced to prepare for civil war. Sir Charles O'Donnell performed a similar service among the Protestants of Munster, and Colonel Phayre among the Orangemen of Dublin. The Orange societies, which were originally founded, and had been all along sustained, by the gentry in their class interest, began to be uneasy and discontented. They had been garrisons for

* In the official correspondence of the period, we get a glimpse of the state of mind prevailing at the Castle. On April 5, Admiral Sir Charles Napier, then in command of the fleet in Irish waters, wrote to the First Lord of the Admiralty :—

"MY DEAR LORD AUCKLAND,—I have had a conference this morning with Lord Clarendon, and by what he says, and what I hear from other quarters, I think things are in a very ticklish position.—I am, &c.,

"CHAS. NAPIER."

the landlords, but at this time some of them began to speculate on the absurdity of 200,000 men arming and organising to sustain a system by which less than two thousand of them prospered, and more than a hundred and fifty thousand suffered oppression and spoliation in common with the rest of the agricultural class. But the precaution on which he relied most was to detach the Catholic clergy from the national cause. He wrote to a colonial archbishop on his way to Rome, expressing a profound veneration for the character of the Pope, and offering that the statutes of the Provincial Colleges should be modified to meet his Holiness's objections. These expedients may be considered as lying within the bounds of legitimate diplomacy, but it will be necessary to speak later of others of a different character, which brought his administration into contempt.

When the Confederate leaders were shut up in cabinet, they had a problem to face such as has not often tried men's courage and capacity. The cause they loved was surrounded by dangers on all sides. If they refused to turn the French revolution to immediate account, there would be a reckless and pitiful outbreak, which would be trampled out, and leave the people hopeless for a generation. If they prepared for revolution, whatever influence remained to the O'Connells would be openly or secretly employed to thwart them, and all the priests past fifty years of age, scattered over the country at every point to be occupied, would be antagonists. To collect the materials and make the preparations, without which it was folly and wickedness

to invite the people to fight a trained army, needed time, while Mr. Mitchel was preaching from press and platform that all was ready. A population exasperated by long-suffering and frequent disappointments were naturally deaf to sense and discretion at such an era. They made no doubt that behind his bold defiance lay a definite plan, and they were impatient to have it put into operation. The foolhardy heard of deliberation with contempt—for servile patience, which comes of long subjection, is apt to be followed by rash impatience springing from the same root. And Mitchel diminished the chances of success still more fatally by narrowing the contest to a class-struggle in the interest of democracy. The extravagance of the Communists in Paris, somewhat later, chilled public sympathy with a revolution which had excited universal enthusiasm at the beginning. And a similar effect was produced in Ireland by turning the ancient historic struggle of a people for liberty into a *jacquerie*.

In face of these difficulties they agreed to a course, which was expressed in the subsequent speech of O'Brien; to base the movement broadly on the whole nation; to create an Authority which would be universally recognised as entitled to negotiate and command in the name of the people; and to procure funds and military aid from our countrymen in America. There was a name that was then on all lips. General Shields had led great armies in the field, and held an office in the Senate equivalent to Minister of War, and it was hoped that he would come to the aid of his countrymen, as

General Owen O'Neill had done two centuries before. Funds, in the language of a great French soldier, were the first, second, and third condition of success in warfare.* A revolutionary council can no more dispense with a treasury than a regular government. An *emeute* in Paris used to cost the secret societies a quarter of a million of francs, and an expedition in India cost the British Exchequer more in one day than was contributed to the Confederation during its entire existence; but this was an occasion when the whole Irish race might be expected to come to our assistance. We based our cause not on any new-fangled French Communism, but on the immutable principle that Ireland belongs to the Irish race. We determined to demand the re-establishment of the Constitution of '82; all over Europe such demands had succeeded when they were sustained by the will of a people. And this was the only proposal on which the whole nation might be expected to agree. If it was denied, the time for parley would have passed; like our forefathers, we would unroll the green flag, and beg God, who had so multiplied the muster-roll of free nations in our day, to bless one more just cause. We made only one mistake, but it was a serious one; O'Brien was unwilling to commence negotiations in America while there was still hope to gain the gentry; and he could not invite their assistance if this decisive step were taken. But, if treason is to prosper, it must not be spoken a day before it is acted.

* "Pour faire la guerre, il faut trois choses—l'argent, l'argent, l'argent."

On Wednesday, the 15th of March, an immense meeting of Confederates was held in the Music Hall in Abbey Street.

O'Brien made a speech marked by solid sense and courageous patriotism. He proposed measures to secure the results most essential at the hour—the union of parties, the organisation of the country, and, finally, the great end for which the people were confederated. He had never before expressed a hope of speedy success; but he was of opinion, he said, that with courage and discretion the end was within view. Discretion was indispensable. If an outbreak took place at present, the Government could put it down in a week; or if it won a temporary success, they could starve the country by stopping the supplies of food obtained from abroad. But he did not propose to waste a moment. The Confederation would invite all classes who desired the Legislative Independence of Ireland to inscribe their names on a roll of persons willing to serve in a National Guard. And as a union of Repealers by a process of amalgamating the two existing societies was a clumsy and difficult method, he offered a suggestion that, without amalgamating, they should elect a joint committee, who could consult upon all important occasions. If this proposal were not acceptable, the entire Repeal party would be invited to take up a favourite project of O'Connell's, and elect a Council of Three Hundred. It ought to represent both sections of the National party authentically, and be entitled to speak on behalf of the entire country. For foreign policy they must fraternize with English Repealers, of whom there were several millions,* and, above all, with the people of France. They would probably send a deputation to the United States, and recommend the formation of an Irish brigade there, which would serve hereafter as the basis of an Irish army. He had recently deprecated the advice that the people ought to be trained in military knowledge; but the circumstances were entirely altered, and he now

* The Chartists universally professed themselves Repealers.

thought that the attention of intelligent young men should be turned to such questions as how strong places can be captured and weak ones defended. More than a third of the British army consisted of Irishmen, and there were ten thousand of their countrymen serving in the Constabulary; with both these forces the people ought to cultivate friendly relations. The Irish people were willing and anxious to come to an understanding with the British Government on a very simple and intelligible basis: let them extend to Ireland the system of self-government they were at that moment endeavouring to obtain for Sicily.

Meagher followed up this plan of action by a passionate incitement to give it effect as soon as practicable. He read the language employed by Lord Palmerston a few months before respecting the insurrection at Lisbon: "I say that the people were justified in saying to the Government, If you do not give us a Parliament in which to state our wrongs and grievances, we shall state them by arms and force." This was the ultimatum of Ireland also. "Let the demand for the reconstruction of her nationality be constitutionally made. Depute your worthiest citizens to approach the throne, and before that throne let the will of the Irish people be uttered with dignity and decision. If nothing comes of this—if the Constitution opens to us no path to freedom, if the Union will be maintained in spite of the will of the Irish people, if the government of Ireland insist upon being a government of dragoons and bombardiers, of detectives and light infantry—then up with the barricades, and invoke the God of Battles! Should we succeed—oh! think of the joy, the ecstasy, the glory of this old Irish nation, which in that hour will grow young and strong again. Should we fail, the country will not be worse than it is now. The sword of famine is less sparing than the bayonet of the soldier."

An address to the French Republic was adopted, congratulating them on their success, and thanking them for the respect for religion, private property, and public order which they exhibited.

O'Brien and Meagher were appointed to carry the address to Paris, and with them a silk-weaver named Holywood, as a recognition of the principle which placed Albert, *ouvrier*, in the Provisional Government.

The Confederates were accused by the Castle press of being Jacobins, but the *Nation* replied:—

"We seek liberty, pure and peaceful, if so it can be had; and if not, it is our own blood, rather than that of any unopposing Irishman, we desire to offer as its price. Of all the factions that ever cursed the earth, we have least sympathy with the rancorous, ferocious spirit of Jacobinism. . . . If France rear a new Cæsar, may she rear a new Brutus to smite him; if liberty be threatened by a modern 'September,' may a stronger and more trenchant Lafayette arise to scourge the spawn of anarchy and night."

And John Dillon, speaking for the Citizens' Committee, taught the same lesson:—

"While expressing our admiration of the valour of the citizens of Paris, let us," he said, "not overlook the other virtues which have surrounded their revolution with so much glory—their self-control, their love of order, their respect for property and for religion. While opposing a fearless front to the Government, let us be careful not to afford them any colourable excuse for invading our Constitutional rights. Let us, as we hope to leave a free and happy land to our children, avoid such disgraceful scenes of riot and plunder as have recently occurred in London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow."

Lord John Russell assured the House of Commons that treason more audacious than had ever been heard in a free country was now spoken and written in

Ireland, and he revived his old slander, that the Confederates aimed to effect a total separation from England by social disorganisation—a charge as untrue of the Confederate leaders now as when it was first uttered.

On Monday, the 19th of March, an open-air meeting was held near the North Wall, at which an address from the citizens of Dublin to the new Republic was adopted, and Richard O'Gorman and John Dillon were authorised to carry it to Paris.

Lord Clarendon's watchfulness was vigilant, but nervous and hysterical. He manifestly believed that the moderation of the Confederate leaders was merely a mask to cover their secret designs, and that Mitchel's signal for immediate action disclosed the real intentions of the party. His spies must have performed their functions imperfectly, for he was quite persuaded that St. Patrick's day was fixed for a general insurrection. Throughout the day the troops were ready for a sally on the first signal. Warning was sent to the institution supposed to be in danger. The College was made a cavalry barracks for the occasion, and the students stimulated to fierce hostility against the Confederates. The directors of the Bank of Ireland retained their officers under arms all night, and kept them up to the fighting pitch with good living. Double patrols of police on foot and horse were abroad day and night, and rockets were ready to announce the commencement of hostilities. For this special alarm there was no ground whatever; no rising was meditated on that occasion, but

as there was a constant downfall of rain all day and night, it was believed in the Castle that the inhospitable elements had arrested the movement.

When the occasion passed without an explosion, the Lord-Lieutenant ordered the prosecution of O'Brien and Meagher for their speeches at the late meeting, and of Mitchel for articles in his newspaper. A prosecution for seditious libel, punishable in case of conviction by a short imprisonment, looked ridiculous at a time when every continental mail brought news of successful revolution, and in great cities like Vienna, Berlin, and Milan, the soldier turned his back on the burgher. The prosecuted Confederates gave bail immediately, and the members of the deputation prepared to set out on their mission. A notable fact enables us to measure the march of opinion in the four weeks since the flight of Louis Philippe. Maurice and John O'Connell appeared at the police-office to tender themselves as sureties for O'Brien and Meagher. To have accepted their services would have been discreet at a time when reunion was so much desired; but the sureties already in attendance objected to being set aside, and the opportunity was lost.

O'Brien undertook the mission to Paris under a sense of duty which was sorely tried. There is something noble and touching in the picture of this gentleman —who thought the cause was in grave danger of being destroyed by violence, with which he had no sympathy —patiently labouring to steer it between the sandbanks and surges. "We need," he wrote to me, from London,

"caution and prudence; I do not want cowardice or hesitation." On the eve of his departure he complained that his power of usefulness was being undermined:—

"I find myself connected, in the opinion of those who view things at a distance, with the proceedings of Mitchel, who is regarded as a 'bloodthirsty villain' by many who do not know his good qualities. As regards myself, painful as is this circumstance, I am contented to endure it; but I cannot, without the deepest regret, perceive the injury he has done and is daily doing to the cause of Repeal. It is because I fear that he will ruin the Confederation that I now write earnestly to exhort you not to allow him to plunge it into new difficulties. I greatly fear that his connection with the proposal for a National Guard will tend to defeat and disparage this suggestion, which would otherwise have found favour with men of all classes. I hope to start to-morrow for Paris."*

The object of the deputation was to awaken sympathy for Ireland. They were not authorised to negotiate an invasion, or even to solicit arms or officers from the Provisional Government. They would not have placed Ireland under the feet of France any more than under the feet of England. They believed, in the language of Davis, that

"A nation freed by outward aid is but a corpse by wanton science
Convulsed like life, then flung to fade; the life itself is self-reliance."

But what England did for Flanders, what Holland did for England, what France did for America, France might

* *Nation* Correspondence. O'Brien to Duffy, 24, Lower Belgrave Street, London, March 24, '48.

have done for Ireland—permit and encourage individual citizens to come to her aid. And this is what they expected.*

When they arrived in Paris they found the young Republic already in serious danger from the exactions of the Communists. The Red Republican insurrection, which exploded a couple of months later, was already in fermentation; and the Provisional Government, instead of coming to the aid of struggling nationalities, had enough to do to preserve its own existence. But the democratic section, led by Ledru Rollin, insisted that their danger sprung from timidity and egotism—that a chief function of the Republic was to diffuse popular liberty, and that to help effectually a people in the position of the Irish was the way to consolidate the Republic. After some delay, caused by these internal difficulties, a day was fixed for the reception of the Irish delegates. Lord Wallscourt, Martin MacDermott, who represented the *Nation* in Paris, and Professor Leonard, accompanied them. One of the deputation furnished this picture of the orator who was then a subject of interest throughout Europe:—

"His face is thin, his forehead high, square, and sharp; his eyes are dark, and with a certain subdued brilliancy, as if the fire which supplied it was remote and deep; his lips are thin, speaking resolve, but not passion. Like his poems, his face is

* Lamartine, in his "History of the Revolution of 1848," describes them as having sought arms; but in this he was wrong, and I am assured that he subsequently acknowledged his error. "*L'Angleterre n' attendait pas avec moins de sollicitude la réception que ferait Lamartine aux insurgés Irlandais partis de Dublin pour venir demander des encouragements et des armes à la République Française.*"

full of subdued melancholy. When he speaks his coloured words seem rather to shine with intellect than to throb with passion. In fact, although his movement is animated and appropriate, his face, his eyes, his words are spiritual, but passionless. His oratory is a spoken meditation."

Lamartine's answer was a great disappointment, and some of the delegates were persuaded that after it was read to them it was further modified; for the version printed in the *Moniteur* was less satisfactory than the one read in the Hôtel de Ville. He is believed to have said, with peculiar significance, "*La politique impose un sceau sur les lèvres, mais nos cœurs ne battent pas moins pour l'Irlande.*"

We now know that Lord Normanby was instructed to warn him that if he encouraged agitation within the British Empire, it might be necessary to withdraw the Embassy.* His answer, as printed, suggests the suspicion that it was modified to evade this danger. It begins with sonorous platitudes on the transcendental ideas which the Republic represented, and suddenly drops down to the timorous policy of Louis Philippe. France—this was the upshot—had infinite goodwill to Ireland, but she could not interfere with the internal affairs of the British Empire.† This answer received a distinction of which it was worthy, but which had not before been accorded to any of the State papers of a

* Letter dated "Foreign Office, March 21."—"Life of Lord Palmerston," by Mr. Evelyn Ashley.

† Lord Normanby was naturally directed to thank Lamartine "for his handsome and friendly conduct about the Irish deputation."—Mr. Evelyn Ashley's "Life of Lord Palmerston."

Republic: it was reprinted by the British Government, and posted on all the police-stations in Ireland.

The deputation had interviews later with Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc, who were less cautious and diplomatic.* They afterwards made a round of the popular clubs, but neither addressed any of them nor announced themselves as the Irish delegates. They visited the Irish College, and were courteously received by the President and professors. One of them † says:—

"On leaving the college the students, to the number of a hundred, surrounded them, and greeted them with cheers such as were rarely heard even in that era of popular enthusiasm. O'Brien, Meagher, and O'Gorman addressed a few words to them; O'Gorman particularly touched them. The fine young fellows, most of whom are now prelates or priests, flung up their caps with ringing cheers. But the President, Dr. McSwiney, did not share their enthusiasm. Several of the students were censured, and seven or eight of the most conspicuous (one of whom is now an archbishop), were under menace of expulsion for nearly a week."

O'Gorman and Eugene O'Reilly remained in Paris after the deputation left. O'Brien wished them to learn, in that great school of popular warfare, the prompt discipline of new levies, and the rough-and-ready organisation of insurgent forces, and they applied themselves steadily to this task. They were under arms, I am assured by Mr. Leonard, with the corps of the National

* Louis Blanc afterwards told me in London his view of the situation, which was a characteristic one: "Irish politics were in the hands of priests, and with priests the party of the Revolution could transact no business."

† Mr. J. P. Leonard.

Guard to which he belonged, on the night of April the 16th, when an insurrection of the Red Republicans was expected.*

During the absence of O'Brien, the prosecution of the Confederates was met by the Council in a manner designed and well-calculated to keep the public spirit at a high pitch. An extraordinary meeting was called, which commanded an immense attendance. The strongest passages in the speeches were deliberately read and re-affirmed by the speakers, and a resolution was passed adopting the sentiments, and ordering the prosecuted speeches to be printed and circulated throughout the island. This duty was entrusted to O'Gorman and me. Ireland, he said, had been robbed of many rights, but one right remained—the right before which the Stuarts and the Bourbons had fled, and the Hapsburgs were flying—the right of resistance. Mitchel, Reilly, and Doheny also spoke, advocating a National Guard and speedy armament. Mr. Mitchel did not think the people ought to have waited for continental revolutions; nothing which had occurred in Europe had

* Mr. Leonard is the chief actor in a story as good in its way, I think, as anything in Lever, or in the whole range of Irish comedy. After a certain intimacy with a well-known Irish refugee, he considered he had received grounds of offence, and renounced the gentleman's acquaintance, declaring that henceforth they must be strangers. Calling shortly afterwards on another Irish friend in Paris, whom for the purpose of this story I will name O'Neill, the door of the *appartement* happened to be opened by the refugee in question. Mr. Leonard looked at him courteously for a moment, as one does with a stranger, and then, raising his hat, demanded of his ex-acquaintance:—"*Monsieur, est-ce ici que demeure un Irlandais qui se nomme O'Neill?*" The amazed refugee answered in English that Mr. O'Neill was not at home. "*Monsieur,*" rejoined Leonard, "*voulez-vous bien avoir la bonté de lui donner cette carte! Monsieur, j'ai l'honneur de vous saluer!*" and he marched away with all the honours of war.

altered his mind a hair's-breadth. In conclusion, he announced that he would be content with nothing short of an Irish Republic; an addition to his programme to which continental revolution was not altogether a stranger. The *Pilot* announced that Duffy, O'Gorman, and Doheny were about to be prosecuted for the speeches of that evening, but Lord Clarendon had prosecutions enough on hand for the moment.

The state of opinion in a civilised country may be gauged by the number, character, and distribution of the public journals. The Whig Government represented so small a section of opinion in Ireland that it was supported by only one newspaper in Dublin, and that one, it afterwards appeared in evidence, was subsidised out of the Secret Service money. In such a case the Lord-Lieutenant might naturally seek for any honourable help available; but he sought help which was dishonourable, and paid a heavy mulct in reputation and influence. There was a newspaper in Dublin named the *World*, living by black-mail extorted from the weak and the criminal, and by all the base arts with which the *Satirist* in London had made men familiar. Its character was so well known that the editor had been convicted and sent to gaol for attempting to obtain hush-money. With this person, whom the crown counsel afterwards described as "a hang-dog looking wretch," an "assassin of character," and "one of the basest of mankind," Lord Clarendon entered into personal negotiations. He admitted him to confidential interviews, gave him money, and furnished him with hints for

turning French politics to account, in assailing the Young Irelanders, in articles afterwards quoted in England as the testimony of an impartial writer. It was an office almost as infamous as that of a procurer of the Stuarts, or a poisoner of the Medici; but the writer's character rendered his slanders so innocuous in Ireland, that there will not be found in the national journals the slightest answer to them during the whole period of his employment.*

But to manufacture public opinion for consumption in England was work too important to entrust to a single agent. Several were engaged. One member of the Confederation consented to sell himself to the Castle, and he was employed furnishing letters to the *Evening Post* caricaturing the Confederate leaders. Dr. Cooke Taylor, who had been found a serviceable journalist in the Anti-Corn-Law movement, was recommended to Lord Clarendon by his brother, and undertook to demonstrate the absurdity of his native country expecting

* The facts got disclosed in an action which Mr. James Birch, the editor in question, took against Sir William Somerville, the Chief Secretary, under characteristic circumstances. He got about a thousand pounds from Lord Clarendon for his honourable services while they were being rendered, but this did not content him. He wanted an appointment, and pestered every member of the Government in succession to do him what he called justice. He complained bitterly that they had recently given appointments, or promise of appointments, to young Dan O'Connell, and to the Secretary of the O'Connell tribute, who could not render any services comparable to his. If an appointment was not to be had, he must at least have more money, on pain of dangerous disclosures. In November, 1856, Lord Clarendon bought him off with hush-money to the extent of £2,000, and received in return his private correspondence with this agreeable person. Just a year later, Birch took an action against the Chief Secretary for work and labour done, the work and labour being the same service for which he had been already paid. The jury gave him a nominal verdict. He was shortly after convicted of a libel on a lady, and disappeared from Ireland, his paper having long before become extinct.]

the control of her own affairs. Similar aid was sought right and left. A Conservative barrister, of some literary gifts, was employed to fabricate plausible pamphlets justifying jury-packing and alarming the fears of Protestant Nationalists. At the same time a "Sincere Friend" remonstrated with farmers (in a *brochure* issued by Mr. Thom, the Government printer) for not consulting the clergy before engaging in political or agrarian societies. If they followed the advice of the clergy their "sincere friend" (in the Castle) was confident they would be right and safe. In short, a shower of little lying pamphlets fell on hamlet and farmhouse like the plague of frogs on the exiles of Israel.

But hiring Mr. Birch was not the basest expedient employed in the interest of loyalty and order. By a happy accident a circumstance became public which illustrates the system pursued in the Castle in a significant manner. A man named Kirwan, who had been a domestic servant, called on Hyland, a blacksmith, and requested him to make him half-a-dozen pike-heads; got them, and paid for them by instalments, like a struggling patriot. But during these proceedings some cautious Nationalists watched the pikeman home, and traced him to the Lower Castle Yard, where the Chief Commissioner of Police had his quarters. On this discovery, it was resolved to turn the tables by prosecuting him. He was brought to the district police-office,* and as he was probably unaware that he had been detected, he still posed as a patriot. When he was asked what he wanted with

* April 4th, 1848. Tom Arkins was the prosecutor.

the weapons, he replied, "to use them in the coming year." Under the law, as it then existed, it was not an offence, except in a proclaimed district, to make or possess pikes; and the prosecution would have failed but for this *maladroit* answer. As the police-office was crowded with citizens who knew how to make themselves heard, the magistrate had no choice but to commit him for trial. His lodgings were searched, and among his possessions were found instructions for making barricades and the insignia of an Orange society of which he was a member. Mr. Kirwan was on the high-road to transportation, when Colonel Browne, the Chief Commissioner of Police claimed him as one of his hired spies.

Against all difficulties the Confederates made steady way. The desire for the union which they demanded exhibited itself in the provinces, in clubs, and conferences of United Repealers. Lord Miltown joined the Repeal Association, in order, he said, to promote a reunion of the party. The Young Irelanders were, in his opinion, right in the abstract about Moral Force, but wrong in the application of the principle to Ireland; they were altogether right, however, in forbidding the Association being made a stepping-stone to office. Mr. Thomas Galwey, a respectable barrister, who had taken little part hitherto, directly recommended the Council of Three Hundred as the best solution of all difficulties; and it was at length authoritatively announced that the Old Irelanders would concur in this measure.* There

* "We feel unmixed gratification at being enabled to announce that already the Repeal Association has taken a decided step towards the ac-

were a few notable recruits to the Confederation from the gentry and professional classes.* In England the new strength and purpose of the movement was recognised. The *Times* considered Repeal a "debateable subject;" the *Daily News* suggested that "this was not the time to make Ireland the one great exception to the rest of Europe and the world;" and the *Morning Chronicle* declared that if the priests joined with the people, the English Government in Ireland was at an end. It was recognised as a curious evidence of the transition opinion was undergoing when *Chambers' Journal* mooted the question of a Federal Union, not for Ireland, but for Scotland. The *Dublin Evening Mail* proposed the same measure, with the occasional residence of the Queen, as a compromise in Ireland. One of the keenest observers on the public stage, still unfettered by the responsibilities of office, is said to have declared that if the movement were as formidable as it professed to be, a revolution was virtually accomplished in Ireland.† Even Mr. John O'Connell was mesmerised

complishment of what now has become the national desire—the formation of a great National Council, comprising the men who represent the intellect, the wealth, and the confidence of the country."—*Freeman*, April, '48.

* Especially John Maher, D.L., formerly member for Wexford; Professor Stevenson, who forfeited his office of Fellow of Saint Columba College by joining; Mr. R. D. Ireland, afterwards Attorney-General in the colony of Victoria; Sir James Anderson; Mr. Stanton Cahill; Mr. Morgan, solicitor to the Dublin Corporation; Mr. Robert McDowell, President of the Chamber of Commerce in Belfast; Mr. Hamo de Massay, a gentleman of ancient lineage and considerable estate; Mr. Stritch Fuller, afterwards a minister of the Established Church; and a quite notable number of country solicitors from North and South.

† "Certain it is that Mr. Disraeli said to Mr. O'Brien in the House of Commons that if the organisation were in reality as formidable as represented, the revolution was already virtually accomplished."—Mr. P. J. Smyth's "Life of General Meagher"

by the spirit of the time. The *Pilot* announced on his behalf that "if all constitutional safeguards were removed, then resistance was no longer a crime, but a matter of time and calculation."

Close upon these events came the news that the House of Hapsburg had abandoned its capital to the burghers, and that the students of the Ecole des Beaux Arts preserved public order and mounted guard on the government offices and foreign embassies. In the neighbouring realm, the strange congeries of states which Frederick the Great by genius and duplicity had raised to be a powerful kingdom, the people demanded the dismissal of the Ministry, a Burgher Guard, and the convocation of a free Parliament; they raised barricades, died gallantly defending them, and got all their demands conceded. In Wurtemberg the populace rose against an oppressive aristocracy with such effect that high mightinesses and well-born lords had fled like a flock of screaming gulls down the Danube. In Hanover concessions which would content Ireland were demanded on the alternative of immediately deporting the royal house beyond the frontier and dismissing them to England.

The effect of this news was electric. Immense meetings were held in the chief provincial cities for union and action. In Kilkenny the election of delegates to the Council of Three Hundred was ordered, and four members, two from each section of Repealers, were chosen. In Limerick Dr. O'Brien, an influential local clergyman who adhered to Conciliation Hall, declared at a meeting

of three thousand citizens that if the populace continued their foolish hatreds the curse of the dead and the contempt of the living would fall upon them. Galway, at a meeting where the High Sheriff presided, Clonmel, and Waterford, followed these examples. In Dublin a Students' club was founded with a hundred members, who were to be so many missionaries of revolution, and a Polytechnic Society, where lessons of practical chemistry would be taught, primarily the manufacture of gunpowder.* A club of mercantile assistants and travellers followed; young men in confidential employment in some of the principal houses in the city, who proved very serviceable in propagating confederate opinions among the commercial classes.

There was a noticeable movement even among the social powers. Lord Ffrench proposed that the Repealers should send a deputation to the Queen, to represent that if the restoration of the Constitution of '82 was denied, the result would be civil war and probably Separation. After blood was shed the offer of Repeal would come too late. The Earl of Shrewsbury, who had large Irish estates, was understood to have advised Lord John Russell that the time was come to make the same concession, which had been made by Charles James Fox. As his proposal was probably ill received, he afterwards suggested that Peel should be called to power, in order to make a concession which

* The founders of the Students' Club were Messrs. John Savage, R. D. Williams, and Kevin O'Dogherty; of the Polytechnic Society Professor Stevenson and Mr. Lyons.

had become essential to save the country from Republicanism and Communism.

But the most welcome and encouraging circumstance was the formation of a Protestant Repeal Association. At length the class, who, as we believed, alone were wanting to ensure success, made a decisive move. The leader of this organisation was Samuel Ferguson, a barrister and a man of letters. Ferguson sprang from the northern planters, and his face bespoke his origin—not by ruggedness or sternness, which often characterise an Ulster man of that race, but by a certain simple dignity, and a suavity which were manifestly sincere, but scarcely genial. A deep perpendicular brow and transparent eyes gave intellectual nobility to an expression which would otherwise be somewhat hard. Grave and slow of utterance, he looked like a solid lawyer, and was, in fact, a poet of imagination so vivid that he has wielded, as no one since Ossian has done, the profuse many-coloured rhetoric of the Celt, and in another vein revelled in the wild humour of Irish burlesque. He was a type of the race which gave Drennan and McCracken to Ireland, and has recently given a successful Lord Chancellor and a successful diplomatist to the service of England.

The animus of this movement was typified by a single sentence, in which Ferguson expresses a sentiment which the best men of his class would have echoed:—

"God forbid that a drop of Irish blood should be shed in vindicating any Irish right unless the Irish people be unanimous.

And if you would make them unanimous, respect the opinion of your neighbours, and seek not by terrorism to compel any man to come into your ranks, till his own convictions assure him he ought to do so."

His speech was worthy of an Irish gentleman; a class of which he was a fitting type. He spoke of the moral loss the Union had inflicted in lowering the tone of society, and of the miserable, degraded representatives a divided nation sent to London to present the national demand—men who not only did not represent the property, but did not represent the intelligence or public spirit of the country. It was his conviction that if Ireland had had a local legislator in 1847, money would have been fairly raised from the whole community, which would have saved the lives lost by the mismanagement of the Imperial Parliament. Whatever a gentleman of spirit, education, or honourable ambition, thought best worth living for, had gradually been withdrawn from Ireland. As far as concerned England and the Colonial Empire she had created, he said cordially, "Rule Britannia;" but Ireland was not a colony of Great Britain, but an ancient kingdom, entitled to its distinct nationality, and determined to have it.

A great rally was made for the new organisation. Those who were accustomed to lead what is called Protestant opinion in Parliament, the pulpit, and public affairs, were appealed to by eminent men and women of their own creed to declare themselves Nationalists. A few wavered, still fewer consented; the bulk of them

could not bring themselves to trust the poor people, who have so often shown themselves generous and magnanimous. They feared that Popery would retaliate the wrongs it had endured.* But among the middle class, and the more educated and intelligent of the class living on daily wages, there were numerous recruits, and it was a subject of natural triumph to the Confederates.†

Opposition to Republicanism was the prevailing sentiment among these Nationalists. They sent deputations to the North, and produced a visible effect. The Tenant-Right Association of Lurgan—a peculiarly Orange district—adopted a petition for a native Parliament, and even among Mr. Gregg's Protestant operatives in Dublin a similar motion was defeated with difficulty. They afterwards held meetings in Drogheda and Belfast. It was a symptom of their progress that nine-and-twenty Orangemen were expelled from their lodges in Antrim for disobeying an order which forbade them to consort with Repealers, "whether Papist or Protestant."

Each day brought some fresh and signal evidence of

* The man who exercised the widest influence over Protestant opinion at that time wrote to a lady: "Your friend Duffy is no bigot, but he must know well that he could not find ten men of his own creed in Ireland who would be as tolerant as himself. He may be enthusiast enough to believe it possible that he and his handful of allies could protect religious liberty in a parliament of priest-selected members, but it is the dream of an enthusiast. He and his friends would be the first victims."

† "The Protestant Repeal Association promises to be formidable, and Ferguson's memorial also. The latter was produced for the first time at Lord Cloncurry's, where a few of the Council—among others, Mitchel and I—were asked to dine and consider it. If Mr. Monsell, Mr. De Vere, and your friends took it up, we might be saved from war, and its unknown results. The Government could not resist such a movement, backed by ours."—Duffy to O'Brien. Cahirmoyle Correspondence.

progress. Two priests, who, it was hoped, represented a large reserve of opinion, declared for a revolution, provided it were made with discretion and honour. Father Bermingham* advised the people on the conduct necessary at such a crisis. Let them make their peace with God, and be prepared to die if necessary. Let them arm quietly; nothing should tempt them to premature action. But when their liberties were invaded, not two or three counties should rise, but the whole people as one man. There ought to be nothing sectarian in the movement. If Repeal was to create Catholic ascendency he would reject it. Irishmen of all classes ought to be invited to join in obtaining, or making, the changes desired. The Irish people had no disloyal feelings to the Queen, but they could no longer endure the system which her starvation ministry inflicted. Father Hughes,† in a letter to the Premier, declared that every day made it clearer that if a contest was forced on the country the priests would take part with the people. Out of two thousand parishes, fifteen hundred would probably furnish a national guard of from 500 to 1,000 each. The Constabulary and the Irish soldiers would remember that they and their families must live in the country when the contest was over, and that the obligation of subjects and sovereigns was reciprocal. Submission which surrendered the liberty of a nation was enjoined by no law of national morality.

To keep the tone of the Confederation in harmony with the opinion of reasonable men was an object never

* P.P. of Borris O'Kane. † P.P. Claremorris.

lost sight of; but it was a difficult task in an era of extravagant hopes and extravagant promises. At a meeting in the beginning of April, Dillon directed public attention anew to our actual aims. There were Republicans in the Confederation, but they ought clearly to understand that the object of that body was not the establishment of a Republic, but the Legislative Independence of Ireland; nor was its policy agrarian insurrection, but the creation of a Council of Three Hundred to represent the entire nation, and armament was recommended that the people might be in a position to defend their rights from aggression. Mr. John O'Hagan, in the only public speech he delivered in that era, seconded Dillon's purpose. He moved a resolution repudiating the statement of Lord John Russell that the Confederation promoted social disorder, or desired violent separation from England. Their aim was the Legislative Independence of Ireland, and thereby the attainment of social order, and they desired that such independence might be attained, if possible, without war. For his part, he advocated this policy, because he detested anarchy from his soul. But starvation, rack rents and eviction, the absence of trade and manufactures, a government without root or base and the confidence of the people, was not social order. The bloody three-act tragedy so often performed in this unhappy country—the peasant flung out to perish by the wayside, the landlord murdered, and the assassin dying on a gibbet—was not order but anarchy.

Men who remember nothing of the era, except its

failures, will find it difficult to comprehend how rapidly circumstances were now creating the decisive public opinion, to which it is the duty of rulers to submit. The fervour and intrepidity which Mr. Mitchel brought to the cause contributed a liberal share to this result, but more than any one he rendered success at first difficult, and finally impossible. The plan on which O'Brien relied was constantly disparaged and ridiculed in the *United Irishman*. Dillon and I were assailed for teaching what he himself had habitually taught up to the coming of Lalor. He forgot the studious fairness which had been the practice of the party to which he belonged, and permitted things to be done on his behalf as indefensible as any which Mr. John O'Connell had sanctioned in Conciliation Hall. I was charged over and over again, by correspondents of his paper, with having committed offences against democracy in the *Nation*, which had been his own individual acts, not mine. After parting from me with professions of affection and respect, his tone became bitterer and bitterer without any provocation, without any intelligible reason indeed, unless it be that in the high noon of his popularity he felt my presence a memento of much which he wished to forget. It signified without a spoken word—"This policy which has suddenly become so popular is not yours the least in the world; and the author of it is furious at the imposture of calling it yours." *

* It is so painful to criticise the dead, who cannot defend themselves, that I prefer to suffer injustice. But I published in 1854 a "Letter to John Mitchel," criticising his *Jail Journal*, which he answered with

Mitchel has always had followers and partisans who loved his boldness and persistence so well that they recognised no deficiency in his nature. They are accustomed to place him in the hierarchy of Irish patriotism in the same line with Tone and Davis. But no two men, honestly engaged in the same cause, were ever more essentially dissimilar than Thomas Davis and John Mitchel. The difference between them was of the same kind as the difference between Washington and Jefferson, or between Mirabeau and Robespierre. One was a statesman full of resources, circumspect, accustomed to look behind and before; the other was simply a tribune of the people who passionately demanded the peoples' rights. Their animating motive was far from being identical; Davis loved Ireland, Mitchel hated England. Their personal demeanour was as signal a contrast. Davis effaced himself; his name, or any reference to his own work, is not to be found once in all his writings; Mitchel made himself the foremost figure in every transaction; "my policy," "the policy of me J. M.," and the like, recur in his letters and leading articles as habitually as in Cobbett's, from whom he derived the practice. Davis welcomed any gain to the country from any quarter, and worked cheerfully to promote a quite secondary end of this kind. Mitchel would hear of

elaborate pains, and I commend the letter and the answer to readers who take an interest in this subject. It specifies the instances in which he allowed me to be assailed in his newspaper for acts or writings which were not mine, but were his; and the instances in which he personally assailed me for proceedings which he knew were not individually mine but were common to me with O'Brien, Meagher, McManus, and Martin, whom he applauds; and which were equally good or equally bad, in all the cases concerned _ And in fact were wholly good.

nothing but the main end—not merely in the flush of revolutionary passion, but afterwards when all immediate prospect of attaining it had disappeared. Davis's counsel was always weighty, always based on public principles, always impersonal; Mitchel's judgment of what was fit to be done in an emergency was rarely of practical value, and his opinion was liable to be unduly influenced by his personal relation to the men or the circumstances. What Davis aimed to do, and by what agencies, all his friends knew; Mitchel's aim was doubtless to drive the English out of Ireland, but his method was a scheme without map, or landmarks, and still widening into more indefinite obscurity. He did not possess or understand the art of organisation—the art which transforms a crowd into a party, a mob into an army, and a distracted province into a nation. Of the fertile devices for promoting his cause which made up so much of Davis's life, his labour in the learned societies, his social propagandism, his sowing seed for the future, there is nothing to be found in the life of Mitchel.*

The comparison with Tone is even less accurate. Tone was a projector and organiser. He was a man who must be satisfied that there was an intelligible relation between the means and the end in a project, before he embraced it. His schemes of revolu-

* Mr. Luby in his "Recollections" of this era, says, speaking of Fr. Kenyon:—"Now freely admitting that Kenyon's high eulogium of his friend was in great part merited—it seems to me, nevertheless, that John Mitchel would have been a better example of a leader without a definite plan, than Lalor. The last-named had certainly some talent for organisation, while nothing but the blind partiality of friendship could accord to Mitchel, with all his brilliant gifts, the praise of being an organiser."

tion were as carefully projected as an engineer's scheme of a bridge over a great river, or a tunnel under the sea. He never multiplied twice two into twenty, or believed in the manifestly impossible. And on the humane side of his nature the contrast was as striking. In his Diary he never mentions one of his associates or rivals —Lewins, for example, who superseded him as representative of Ireland at Paris, or Arthur O'Connor, who did not cultivate his intimacy—without cordial praise to the full measure of his deserts, while it overflows with love to his intimates. But in the "Jail Journal," written in imitation of the Diary, there is scarcely a kind word for any one, except John Martin, who had no will of his own when his old schoolfellow was concerned, or Reilly, who was content to be his echo.

If an Englishman would gauge the profound depth of bitterness which generations of injustice and scorn have created in Ireland, here is a barometer. Mitchel proposed nothing at that era, or during his whole lifetime afterwards, which to a reasonable man contained any promise or possibility of practical results, or which hurt England more than the prick of a pin. Yet he continued to be loved by multitudes of Irishmen, because it was certain beyond all doubt that he execrated England. He was not a guide whom it was possible to follow; in the main he pointed to no road which led anywhere, but he was a constant trumpet of resistance to England, and this was enough.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONFLICT IN THE COURTS OF LAW.

THE British Cabinet were watching two enemies, and resolved to strike them separately. The Chartists were still threatening revolution, but the sense and discretion of the country were against them, because what they claimed was attainable by peaceful methods. A Chartist petition, the signatures to which were said to amount to millions, was to be presented to Parliament on the 10th April, and a meeting on a great scale was summoned to accompany it to the House. As it was proposed that this meeting should march from the northern suburbs to Palace Yard in military array, the Government considered that it was the beginning of the threatened revolution, and took measures accordingly. Soldiers were massed at the barracks and at strategic points of the City, and reinforcements were ready in the garrison towns to come to their assistance. But that the movement might if possible be arrested without military aid, a large number of special constables from the commercial and professional classes were sworn in to preserve the peace. The attendance on the appointed morning would have been considerable for an ordinary occasion, but for the purpose in view it was contemptible; and as the Government and middle classes were on the

alert, the scheme was abandoned. The Government, who had been uneasy and alarmed, were triumphant at this collapse. Relieved of their fears at home, they turned their attention to Ireland, and devised measures more effective than the feeble manœuvres of Lord Clarendon. To suppress plain-speaking in the press and at public meetings, they proposed a new and stringent law, by which what was only sedition, punishable by a brief imprisonment, became treason-felony, punishable by transportation for life. To recommend by open and advised speaking, or writing, the use of force for the purpose of effecting political changes constituted this new offence. There was scarcely a speech made at the Confederation since the French Revolution, or an article published in the national journals, which would not have violated this rigorous law. It constituted in effect an indictment against the bulk of the Irish nation. To justify his proposal for a fundamental alteration in the right of free meeting and free publication of opinion, the Home Secretary read only extracts from two or three articles and speeches, but the House found them sufficient.* O'Brien, who arrived from Paris before the second reading, warned ministers that they were advising their Sovereign as rashly as Guizot or Metternich had done. If they suppressed free speech, and refused to yield a free Parliament, they would have to encounter the risk of a Republic. It had been said that he went to France to solicit armed aid. Had he

* The articles were Mr. Mitchel's in the *United Irishman*, and the speech one of Mr. Duffy's respecting the Paris deputation.

done so, he would have returned with a legion of auxiliaries; but he had no desire to impose on his country one species of servitude instead of another. If its redemption were won by foreign bayonets, it could only be preserved by foreign bayonets, and he had no intention of placing his country under foreign dominion. The Confederate leaders had been assailed; though he had an opportunity of knowing the most distinguished men of all parties in that House, he had never seen men acting for a great political object animated by such pure and disinterested motives as those with whom it was his pride to act.

This speech was delivered the day after the Chartist failure, and the House was in tremendous exultation. He was interrupted throughout with groans and clamour, which a correspondent compared to the howling of a menagerie.

Lord John Russell announced the policy of the Government on the Irish Question with unusual directness. "I shall take measures of force, if necessary; and I will, as long as I have any breath or life in me, oppose the Repeal of the Legislative Union."

But the Five Pound Repealers lent themselves cheerfully to the task of gagging and fettering their country. Major Blackhall, and Messrs. Grace, Magan, Morgan John O'Connell, and O'Gorman Mahon, Repeal members, Mr. William Keogh—an astute adventurer, fighting on his own account—and Mr. Chisholm Anstey, elected by the Confederates of Youghal, but in progress of being converted into an adherent of Lord Palmerston,

supported the Felony Bill; and a meeting of Irish peers and members placed their services at the disposal of the crown against any seditious attempt to overthrow the institutions of the country. This chivalrous band included Mr. John O'Connell and his cousin, Sir Lucius O'Brien, O'Gorman Mahon, and a man who was then commencing a memorable career, John Sadlier, attorney and banker.

After O'Brien's return to Dublin, a form of enlistment for the National Guard was prepared, and confidential letters sent to friends in the country, to promote the Council of Three Hundred.

It was intended that the Council should be not a toy, but a weapon. Each member was to have a constituency of clubs with a thousand enrolled men, if it proved practicable, and to bring a sum of at least £100 as the contribution of his district to the treasury. Speaking on behalf of an enrolled confederacy it would possess an authority which would be honoured and obeyed. Whatever voice made itself heard in the country now declared for the policy of the Confederates. We were assured from distant and widely-separated places that the people only awaited the signal. It was essential to make sure of the actual facts, and O'Brien determined to judge for himself. He proposed to visit the chief towns in Munster, beginning with Limerick, and review the local Repealers. It was suggested at the Council that Meagher and Mitchel should accompany him, but he told Mitchel frankly that he could not accept his help. If he made such an excursion in his company,

he would be identified with opinions which he did not share or approve. Mitchel acquiesced, and it was arranged that O'Brien and Meagher should form the deputation. At Limerick, where the mission commenced, the Confederates held a soirée,* and O'Brien was much surprised and offended at meeting Mitchel as one of the guests. He thought he had provided effectually against such an accident; but Mitchel was of opinion that he was at liberty to accept an invitation, which the Limerick Repealers, who were ignorant of the compact, had sent him as one of the "Prosecuted Patriots." † He had quite recently given offence to the Old Irelanders by an attack on O'Connell's memory, and by treating the project of reconciliation with contempt. When the news of his arrival circulated, they vowed to avenge themselves on the moment. As soon as the proceedings commenced, a mob gathered outside; stones were thrown through the windows, an attempt was made to force open the door, a bonfire was lighted to burn Mitchel in effigy, and it was believed that the rioters designed to burn down the building where the soirée was held. Such an occurrence in a town where his popularity had long been unbounded deeply moved O'Brien. He went to the door to remonstrate with the assailants, and a stone struck him in the face—by acci-

* It took place on Saturday, April 29th.

† Mr. O'Brien intimated to me his aversion to any public association with me, and his strong wish that I should not accompany him and Mr. Meagher on their proposed tour in the south, in which they contemplated the holding of meetings at New Ross, Waterford, Cork, and Limerick. I at once yielded to his wish. . . . I went to Limerick on the special invitation of the Limerick Repealers."—J. Mitchel, *United Irishman.*

dent, it was afterwards affirmed. The mob when they recognised him were dismayed. They declared that they meditated no injury to him, and a body-guard of twenty men was selected on the instant to accompany him home, where he retired, disgusted with the riot, and offended by the occasion of it, the soirée proceeding without him.*

When the news reached London, it was regarded as equivalent to the Chartist catastrophe on Kennington Common. The *Times* announced that the Funds rose; the press was joyful over the event, and declared that England's opportunity had come; Mr. Thackeray wrote the "Battle of Limerick" in his best spirit of banter to render O'Brien ridiculous, omitting from the picture nothing except the facts of the case.

But the result in Ireland was different. Next day the respectable men of all parties in Limerick waited on O'Brien to express their sympathy and respect. It was necessary that he should return to Dublin to take his trial for sedition, and he was followed by a crowd of all classes with blessings and plaudits. Addresses poured in upon him day after day from distant places framed in the same spirit. But he had been deeply outraged, and he announced his intention of retiring from public life till the Irish people forgot their senseless divisions.

His most intimate political friends contended that there was no release for him, or any of us from our

* Rev. Dr. O'Brien was charged with being the author of this mischief, but in a letter to McGee, immediately after the occurrence, he denounced the infamous outrage on O'Brien, and declared that had he been in Limerick he would have risked his life to prevent it.

responsibility, except success or death. Repealers of every section, even the leaders of Conciliation Hall, entreated him not to quit his post. The wrong he felt most keenly was being made responsible for opinions which he regarded as supremely foolish and wicked; and the accidental circumstance that there appeared on the day of the Limerick riot an exposition of Confederate principles entitled "The Creed of the *Nation*," which won his entire approval, contributed to overcome his reluctance to resume his position. At length he assented, but on one condition—he must not again be made responsible for Mr. Mitchel's opinions. In such a difficulty Mitchel declared he could not mistake his duty; and he and Reilly retired from the Confederation, stating their motives plainly in letters which were made public.

O'Brien resumed his position under circumstances to try a man's true mettle. The treason-felony Act was now law, and the Lord-Lieutenant, in the confidence of his new power, had issued a proclamation forbidding the enrolment of the National Guard or the election of the Council of Three Hundred.

The week beginning midway in May was a momentous one for the Confederates. On Monday O'Brien was to be tried for sedition, and clubs, mustering ten thousand men, accompanied him from his residence to the Four Courts. The jury was carefully packed, but by this time nationality had penetrated into unexpected places, and they could not be persuaded to concur in a verdict. Next day Meagher was put on his

trial, and on Wednesday it was necessary to discharge the jury, because an agreement was again impossible. These successes were received with boundless enthusiasm by the people. A foreign Government which could not obtain a verdict for manifest sedition was pronounced to be in as bad a way as a general whose army is in mutiny. But the escape was a narrow one; gossips were able to report that in each case there was only one or two dissentient jurors.* Mitchel's trial for sedition would have followed, but that to baffle the enemy by postponing an immediate issue he had unluckily pleaded what is called a dilatory plea. To counteract this strategy the Government arrested him two days before O'Brien's trial, and committed him to prison under the Treason-Felony Act. His trial was fixed to commence on Saturday, the 20th May, a week after his arrest; two successive victories begot extravagant hopes, and the bulk of the Confederates were confident that he could not be convicted. But this was counting without the Sheriff's office, and forgetting the special prejudice which Mitchel's extreme opinions excited.†

In the Council there was deep anxiety and alarm. They felt that the Government could not afford to be defeated again, and defeated by a man who had so often

* On O'Brien's jury there were three Catholics, but two of them, Messrs. Sweetman and James Power, were for a conviction. On Meagher's jury there was but one Catholic.

† An article in the *United Irishman*, written by Reilly, recommending the people, in case of a street fight, to throw vitriol on the soldiers, excited special indignation. It is a strange illustration of the ethics of party warfare, that nearly twenty years after, this article was attributed to me by political antagonists in Australia, and a comic paper depicted me carrying a jar of vitriol for the purpose in question.

predicted this disaster. Whatever angry power and malignant skill could do to obtain a verdict was certain to be done. The question was, how could it be averted? To inflame opinion till it grew red hot against the base practice of jury packing might alarm the class of jurors upon whom the Castle counted. A great open-air meeting of Confederates was summoned for this purpose, and the general body of citizens called a meeting in the Royal Exchange with a similar object. It was necessary to consider, at the same time, what was to be done in case of a conviction. A small minority of the Council thought preparations ought immediately to be made for a rescue. If the Government could carry off a man who had so completely identified himself with the revolution it would greatly dishearten the people. It was determined to ascertain the wishes of the clubs, and their state of preparation.

When we took stock of our resources, it appeared that Dublin city and county had thirty clubs, numbering from 200 to 500 members each; Cork city eleven, and the neighbouring towns half a dozen; Kilkenny city four, and Limerick and Waterford one each; in the towns and villages of Tipperary there were ten clubs; in the towns and villages of Wexford four; at Ennis one, under the management of a younger brother of Sir Colman O'Loghlen, who has since inherited his fortune and title; in the city of Galway one, under Edward Butler, who afterwards won reputation as a lawyer of solid ability at the Antipodes; and in Ulster only three. Though an agrarian revolution had

been constantly insisted upon as the road to liberty, there was not one club in the agricultural districts. Lalor assumed, indeed, that the trampled peasantry were as ready for insurrection as gunpowder for the match but this proved to be a rash and fatal assumption.

It was easy, at the same time, to count the muster-roll of our antagonists and note their elaborate precautions. There were ten thousand troops in the city, perfectly armed and equipped, and nearly forty thousand in the country; all the strategic points were occupied and fortified. There was not a week's supply of food in Dublin, and all the food in the island, except what was growing in the soil, was in warehouses where the English army could reduce it to ashes in four-and-twenty hours. Those who had read the history of the Desmond war could scarcely doubt that they would do so without scruple if it became necessary; and hunger reduces an army to a mob, and turns an insurrection into a stampede. But the chief difficulty of a rescue was one created by Mitchel himself. He had scoffed at the necessity of systematic preparation, and there was no depôt of arms or ammunition. He had declared a leader would come with the necessity, and there was no officer among the Confederates who could take charge of a company. He had derided reconciliation, and there was no cordial unity between the sections of the national party. Some of his partisans had armed, and were perhaps provided with ammunition for a day or a week; but a man who sympathised with him declared that they did not know, with certainty, where to lay

their hands on the first barrow and pickaxe to throw up the first barricade. Money is the sinews of revolution even more than of war; if the ordinary method of supplying food were interrupted, a famine would ensue in a few days, and it was certain the ordinary method could only be maintained by paying for necessary articles at least the usual price. But those who insisted on immediate revolution had no funds whatever.

Meagher and O'Gorman made a personal inspection of the Dublin clubs with a view to determine whether, as far as they were concerned, a rescue was feasible. They sought information from all sources, and they arrived at the conclusion that the people were unprepared, unorganised, unarmed, and incapable of being even roughly disciplined for such an attempt. In truth, the insensate policy of deriding preparation had borne its natural fruit—no one was prepared. A student of that era, who has since become a man of letters, has somewhere delivered a general judgment on his people, which was peculiarly applicable to that period: "The Irish are always ready for revolution, but they never make ready." *

O'Brien and Dillon were convinced before this survey of the clubs that a rescue could not be under-

* Mr. Savage. A couple of weeks later Meagher explained publicly, at a Confederate meeting, the course that had been taken and the motives of it: "We told you in the clubs, four days previous to the trial, the reasons that compelled us to oppose the project of a rescue. The concentration of 10,000 troops upon the city, the incomplete organisation of the people, the insufficiency of food in case of a sustained resistance, the uncertainty as to how far the country districts were prepared to support us. Call me coward—call me renegade! I will accept these titles as the penalties which a fidelity to my convictions has imposed."

taken without ruin to the cause. Neither of them would have permitted any danger to himself to precipitate a movement on which the fortune of the country depended. It was now May, and they hoped to secure a general and simultaneous rising in the autumn, when the new food supplies would be available, and farm labourers could be withdrawn from their ordinary employment without public disaster, and when a union of parties, and perhaps of classes, was attained, and funds and munitions of war provided. They now took, frankly and unreservedly, the ground that no such attempt must be made. They would have risked their lives to save their confederate; but the interest of the national cause was superior to all personal consideration. Dillon moved a resolution to this effect in the Council, and after a frank statement of the case it encountered no serious resistance.* Mr. Martin suggested objections, but his gentle tone and placid demeanour were ill-calculated to kindle revolutionary desperation. Father Kenyon, who exercised decisive authority in critical cases, did not employ it on this occasion. On the motion of O'Brien the resolution was sent to all the clubs in the city, and leading members of the Council undertook to visit their respective club-rooms and interpret it to the members.

O'Brien thought that such a public meeting as we

* May 18.—Mr. Dillon moved a resolution that any outbreak or violation of the peace on the occasion of Mr. Mitchel's trial would be mischievous if not fatal to the national cause, and earnestly called on the citizens to refrain. A copy of this resolution, on the motion of O'Brien, was sent to all the clubs in Dublin.—*Minute Book* of the Irish Confederation.

contemplated was highly hazardous; it might be made the occasion of violence either by rash Confederates or hired spies of Colonel Browne, and he wished it to be abandoned. The Council, to satisfy his reasonable apprehensions, ordered that it should be held in daylight, but would not consent to abandon it. As he did not choose to take the responsibility of a meeting held against his advice, O'Brien went to the country for a few days, and only returned the evening of Mitchel's trial.* The meeting was held, was an immense assembly, and denounced with unequivocal plainness the infamous practices permitted by the Government.

A week after Mitchel's arrest the commission before which he was to be tried opened at Green Street.† A Bill for treason-felony was found by the grand jury without delay or hesitation; but it was noted that they understood the business so ill that the foreman described it as an indictment for sedition, and when he was set right by the Clerk of the Crown, added: "Treason-

* Friday, May 19.—Mr. Gavan Duffy moved that no procession of the clubs should take place that evening, but that a public meeting should be summoned for Sunday at 3 o'clock to protest against the practice of jury-packing. Mr. O'Brien opposed a meeting in the existing state of the city, but it was ordered to be held.—*Minute Book.*

May 20.—Letter from Mr. O'Brien read, advising that no public meeting of the Confederation should take place until after Mr. Mitchel's trial. At a public meeting language, he feared, would be used, which would injure the Confederation without saving Mr. Mitchel. If an attempt to excite an outbreak should be made by rash and reckless men, or by emissaries of the Government, the Council would be deemed to have encouraged it if they invited the assemblage of a large multitude in the metropolis. As he was not prepared to take the responsibility of such a proceeding, and had remonstrated against the meeting in vain, he would leave town for a few days.—*Minute Book.*

May 22.—It was moved by Mr. O'Gorman, and seconded by Mr. Dillon, that no procession of the clubs should take place that evening, or at any time, without instruction from the Council.—*Ibid.*

† Saturday, the 20th May.

felony, or whatever it is I know not." It was arranged that the trial should take place on the ensuing Thursday. The judges were Baron Lefroy, a dull and bitter partisan, ugly, and venomous, but without the precious jewel in his head which is a compensation for these defects, and Mr. Justice Moore, who had been of counsel for the traversers on O'Connell's trial. The Crown was represented by the Attorney-General, Mr. Whiteside, Mr. Henn, and a couple of juniors; the prisoner by Mr. Holmes, Sir Colman O'Loghlen, Mr. John O'Hagan,* and Mr. M. J. Barry.

The offences charged consisted of open and advised speaking at the Limerick soirée, and certain letters in his newspaper bearing his own signature.

A gang of officials, skilled in the arts which corrupt justice at its source, and enraged by two defeats, had taken the panel in hand and packed it, with a naked and cynical scorn of public opinion. A panel had already been prepared for the business of the Commission; but when Mitchel's prosecution was ordered they withdrew it, and substituted another, from which the names of Catholics already summoned were omitted, and noted partisans substituted. The amended panel consisted of 120 Protestants and only twenty-eight Catholics, and it was taken from a jurors' book in which the Catholics were two to one. Thirty of these names, it was discovered, had been supplied by an experienced official in a subordinate position, to whom the jurors' book was as familiar as a pack of cards to a sharper.

* Now Mr. Justice O'Hagan.

The counsel for the prisoner challenged the array on the ground of these unfair practices. Baron Lefroy did not see why the religion of a juror should be mentioned; it was a fact which had no bearing on the case. The triers were apparently of the same opinion, for they found that the panel was well and fairly arrayed.* The jury was then chosen. If the Crown had permitted jurors to be sworn as they answered to their names, there were twenty-eight chances to one that there would be no Catholic on the jury. But they were not content with these odds; every Catholic who answered his name was set aside, and out of the 3,000 Catholics on the jury-list not one was permitted to serve.† When the names chosen were called over, they read like the muster-roll of one of Cromwell's regiments: Rambaut and Yoakley, Bridgeford and Collier, Rothwell and Fletcher, Jason Sherwood, Horatio Nelson, and Hallwood Clarke.

The proceedings were unusually brief. There was nothing which required to be proved but the proprietorship and publication of the *United Irishman*. Mr. Holmes was his advocate, and his defence was on the same basis as his justification of the railway article; but

* This was the judge whom Mr. Disraeli described as a veteran Orangeman, transferred from the House of Commons to the Bench, to relieve Parliament of a personage whom he plainly regarded as a cross between a bigot and a bore.

† Not one Catholic. Englishmen will scarcely realise all that this exclusion implied except by a parallel case. The Duke of Cumberland was a typical Tory and political Protestant in those days; he was charged with conspiring against the Queen's throne, tampering with the army, and organising Orangeism in support of his scheme. If he had been put on his trial for that offence in the Protestant city of London, before four Catholic judges and twelve Catholic jurors, one of the jurors, moreover, being an Irishman, would his trial have been regarded as a fair one? If not, was Mitchel's a fair trial?

he carried the doctrine a stage further. Ireland was an enslaved country, and the people of such a country, he contended, were entitled to obtain liberty even by civil war. The court reprobated this dangerous doctrine, but he vindicated it out of Blackstone. If the Parliament of Ireland were restored, the connection might, he was persuaded, last for ages. It was said that a local parliament would lead to Separation; assume for a moment that it did; what right had England to base her greatness on the degradation of another country? Stripped of the disguises which the sophistry of conquerors and courtiers had cast round it, this was the case in its simplicity: A strong man because he was strong enslaved his brother because he was weak; the slave struggles to be free, and the enslaver kills him—kills him because he struggles to be free.* "I speak not," he said in conclusion, "merely for my client; I speak for you and your children, and your children's children. I speak not for myself—my lamp of life is fluttering, and soon must be extinguished; but were I now standing on the brink of the grave, and uttering the last words of expiring nature, I would say, 'May Ireland be happy, may Ireland be free.'"

This appeal to principle might have carried away a jury taken fairly from the panel, but the jury in the box were safe against such a risk. They retired between four and five o'clock, and before seven a Castle tradesman, who acted as foreman, handed in a verdict of guilty. The sentence was postponed till next morning.

* Is not this the history of Ireland in a single sentence?

When the court opened on Saturday it was occupied by a crowd of Confederates and personal friends;* but the Government had provided a solid body of police to keep them in check. Mitchel came into the dock, looking cool and fearless, and tranquilly saluted his friends. He was asked what he had to say that sentence should not be passed upon him. He replied that he had to say that he was convicted by a packed jury, arrayed by a partisan sheriff—a man who was not a sheriff, but a juggler. The judge interposed to protect the other official, and proceeded to pass sentence. This was the first trial under the new Act, and in such a case the sentence is commonly a light one. But Baron Lefroy sentenced Mr. Mitchel to the enormous penalty of twenty years' transportation. In performing this task he took occasion to declare that the defence was nearly as objectionable as the language for which the prisoner was convicted. The venerable advocate immediately interposed to remind the court that he was liable under the Act, and did not shrink from the responsibility.

Mr. Mitchel said he had known all along that he was setting his life upon a cast, but he was confident the victory would be with him, and it was with him.

"I have acted in all this business from the first under a strong sense of duty. I do not repent of anything I have done; and I believe that the course which I have opened is only commenced. The Roman, who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant, promised that three hundred should follow out his

* Meagher, Dillon, Martin, O'Gorman, Doheny, Reilly, Father Kenyon, Dr. Gray, Martin O'Flaherty, and Mr. O'Hara, are named in the contemporary report as being present.

enterprise. Can I not promise for one, for two, for three—aye, for hundreds?"

Meagher, Doheny, Reilly, and a number of other friends, exclaimed that he might answer for them; and there was a rush to the dock to embrace him. The audience were deeply moved, and a shout of execration was directed against the Bench. The judges cried out that the prisoner must be removed, and fled out of the court in a panic. Two turnkeys laid hold of Mitchel and forced him into the passage which leads from the dock to the prison, the police arrested several of his friends, and the disturbance was subdued.

Lord Clarendon had a ship of war in the bay to carry off his prisoner, and within an hour of his sentence he was on his way to Spike Island, the convict depôt at the Cove of Cork.

Before leaving Newgate he was clothed in the grey uniform of a convict, but at the last moment an order arrived from the Castle relieving him from this indignity; but he was retained in iron fetters. The Secretary of the Admiralty sent instructions to the Captain of the "Scourge" that he should not be treated with unnecessary harshness, or anything which could be mistaken for vindictive cruelty, and as regarded food and exercise that he should have such indulgence as the state of his health might seem to require. He sailed from Spike Island on the 1st of June, and got his meals at the commander's table.* His paper was suppressed and his property forfeited to the Crown;

* These facts were disclosed in Parliament.

but the country came promptly to the rescue, and though distress was universal, subscribed a liberal sum for the use of his wife and family.*

More than two years before Mitchel had written in the *Nation* (in a review of Cooper's "Purgatory of Suicides") words which now bore a significant relation to his own position:—

"To take a man from the occupations and distractions of every day life, to place him in a study where he cannot be disturbed, to drive him to mental exertion as a necessary pastime, to strengthen his intellect by discipline and constant application, and to steep his heart in gall and bitterness, and make it beat only for revenge, appears to be the maddest mode of checking dangerous opinions, or interfering with the most effective exertion of men."

* The sum was liberal, considering the state of the country; it amounted to between £1,700 and £1,800.

CHAPTER III.

THE CONSPIRACY.

To the popular eye Mitchel seemed the embodiment of the revolution. He alone had demanded an instant conflict, and struck authority in the face with words more offensive than blows. The Irish gentry probably shared this belief, and when the Government had succeeded in convicting him and carrying him away, they regarded the victory as already won. The subsequent transactions, the brief and partial rising in Tipperary, and its collapse before a handful of constabulary, confirmed this confidence, and in the end it became nearly universal. In truth, the ignominious rout at Ballingarry represented the resources and probabilities of the contest no more than the arrest of Louis Napoleon at Boulogne represented the chances of a second Empire, or the discomfiture of the Radicals at Peterloo the probabilities of parliamentary reform. Mitchel was a type of daring and persistence; but of the qualities which make revolutions he was deficient in some that are essential; and the cause became most formidable, and least desperate, when his influence was withdrawn.

The morning after Mitchel's departure, Father Kenyon called on one of the Confederate leaders to ask, and to tender, advice. Was the cause lost, he

demanded, and if not, what ought to be done? The Confederate was of opinion that the cause was not lost, but that it had been endangered by criminal delay in making essential preparations. They were pledged to insurrection before the year closed, but nothing was ready. The loss of time occurred partly because Mitchel had all along derided preparation, and partly because O'Brien could not yet make up his mind to abandon hope of support from the gentry. The Confederate was of opinion that practical preparations ought to begin from that day. The Council of Three Hundred, with the authority which it would naturally carry, could alone ensure a movement of the whole nation; but it might be impossible to wait for that method, and the Confederation, he contended, ought to appoint an Executive Committee forthwith to act as a *quasi* Government, and take all necessary measures, as if it were commissioned by the whole nation. Kenyon thought such a committee might be appointed without reference to the Confederation, where the fact would be sure to leak out. There was no sort of difficulty, he insisted, in selecting the proper persons. Public confidence sufficiently designated the men for such an office. As respects the Confederate Council, some reconstruction of it, they agreed, was essential; it was overgrown and unwieldy, and ought to be reduced to a convenient number of determined and trustworthy persons. It was too numerous for a Directory, or even to ensure the reasonable privacy, which is all that can be expected where many men are trusted; and it was probable there were one or two of its

members no better than Government spies. An immediate conference of the leaders of the two sections of Confederates was agreed upon, and then for the first time commenced a formal conspiracy. In a country where the will of the nation is accomplished as soon as it is ascertained, conspiracy and insurrection are base and wicked. But were they base or wicked in a country where the will of the people, having been ascertained beyond all controversy, on a subject of the highest importance to their honour and interest, it counted for nothing?

At the conference Kenyon, Martin, and Reilly represented one section—Dillon, Duffy, and a gentleman still living the other. Then and there, for the first time, measures were taken to obtain money, arms, and officers from abroad, to make a diversion in England, and procure the co-operation of the Irish resident there, and to prepare particular local men to expect the event. It amounts to an emphatic verdict on Mitchel's policy of no conspiracy, no preparation, and no leader, that the moment he was withdrawn from the arena his closest friends agreed without hesitation to pursue a directly opposite course.

It was deemed inadvisable to extend the area of responsibility, and it was agreed to communicate to certain of our chief associates the fact that precautions were taken, without naming the agents or specifying the details. O'Brien was at Cahirmoyle, and we refrained from asking him to share these hazardous enterprises. Danger we knew he disregarded, as far as

it involved personal consequences; but he was nervously anxious about the safety of his class, and we foresaw that if he consented to decisive measures, he would prepare them by deliberation so long, and consultations so frequent, that they would be quite fatal to promptness of action. It was a secret relief to men who loved him, and made full allowance for the peculiar difficulty of his position, that they could take this risk wholly on themselves. Enough was said, when he returned to Dublin, to keep good faith; not enough to create responsibility. One Confederate, who was a close friend of Dillon's, and another intimately allied in opinion and affection with Martin and Mitchel, were sent as agents to America.* They were furnished with the necessary credentials—a commission signed by four persons, whose names would be recognised by the Irish in the United States, was given to one of them. The document was smeared with gunpowder and carried in a loaded pistol, that it might be fired off in case of arrest. An alternate authority was provided by his copying into his note-book two sentences which would appear in the *Nation* and *Felon* that reached America a week after him, and furnish clear evidence of his privity with the conductors of these journals. Some weeks later a Confederate, of mixed French and Irish descent, was despatched to Paris on the same errand. Neither of the agents sent to the United States was accustomed

* As all these gentlemen, after more than a generation has elapsed, are still living, and have retired from Irish politics, I refrain from naming them.

to address public meetings, and it was agreed that either Father Kenyon or Meagher should make a tour in the States and publicly solicit funds from Irish and American sympathisers. Father Kenyon had, at this time, a contention with his bishop respecting some of his published opinions: if it could be settled satisfactorily he would be more useful at home; if it could not, he promised to undertake this mission. Meagher was ready for the duty on condition that he should be at liberty to return to Ireland before the harvest was ripe.*

The task of turning the Council of the Confederation into something resembling a Directory was then taken up. Father Kenyon proposed to reduce it to a practicable number by dissolving the existing body and electing a smaller one. Some of us thought this plan dangerous; it would attract attention and excite suspicion; it was trusting to a popular ballot the delicate operation of choosing the fit men, and the

* It was in connection with the above project that Meagher wrote a letter to Smith O'Brien given as evidence on his trial. He went to Cahirmoyle to tell him what was in contemplation, and not finding him at home, wrote:—"Well, then, I come to tell you about the American trip. I am off for New York, God willing, on Saturday.

'O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
My thoughts as boundless and my heart as free.'

What to do? To raise money, to invoke sympathy, to &c., &c., &c., amuse myself! You will be delighted with the Cork organisation. Be so good as to mention at the soirée on Monday night the object and fact of my departure." It was considered in the end that his popularity could be put to better use in organising Munster. Meagher's oratory delighted the people, though it was studded with allusions to facts and sentiments of which they knew nothing. It inspired and intoxicated a well-informed audience, but to the mass it was only vague music. He used himself to tell, with infinite glee, how a shrewd country doctor assured him that he was like the gaudy bottles in an apothecary's window—good to attract the vulgar, but the real medicines were opaque.

exclusions which the process of reduction necessitated would be certain to create jealousy and resentment. A better plan, we thought, was to select carefully a small Executive Committee, and invite the Confederation to grant it extraordinary powers, which it was certain it would do. The Council itself might be retained like a showy dial-plate, which conceals the machinery. But as he set peculiar value on his own method we yielded, and the Council was invited to dissolve itself for the convenience and advantage of the cause. The proposal was unanimously adopted by a large meeting, and the new Council was immediately chosen by ballot. O'Brien did not like the change.

"I should have opposed the proposal," he wrote, "if it had been made during my stay in Dublin; but I did not feel justified in asking the Confederation to rescind a resolution which had received general support." *

A month after Mitchel's conviction the "*Irish Felon*, successor to the *United Irishman*," made its appearance. John Martin was the proprietor, and he took up the post of danger with perfect devotion and singleness of purpose. But he was in the strange dilemma of neither

* The new Council consisted of the following persons, who received the number of votes appended to their names:—

Thomas Francis Meagher	31	Dr. Cane, Kilkenny	23
Father Kenyon	31	James Cantwell	21
Smith O'Brien	30	Denny Lane, Cork	19
Charles Gavan Duffy	30	M. J. Barry	18
John Dillon	30	R. D. Williams	18
Richard O'Gorman	30	John Byrne	15
Frank Morgan	29	B. Dowling, Limerick	14
P. J. Smyth	28	Michael Crean	14
John Martin	25	John Rainor, Taghmon, County Wexford	12
Michael Doheny	25		

And two or three others elected without their consent, and who never acted.

sharing the opinions of the journal he proposed to succeed, nor, in the end, controlling the opinions of the journal for which he became responsible.* His friendship for Mitchel inspired him with the desire to take up his unfinished work—though his own programme, as we shall see, was widely different. He was an upright, simple-minded gentleman, in feeble health and of impaired constitution, as unfit to play a part in a revolution as in a pantomime. He seemed to believe that his genuine desire to succeed would supply all shortcomings; but a man might as well expect to become as strong as Fin Mac Comhal by this method. He felt honest wrath at the misgovernment of the country, but it was a wrath which would never explode in action. When he was most moved it might be said of him, as was said of Condorcet, that "he was a lamb in a passion." The judgment of his associates on his design exhibited the sort of affectionate despair with which one sees a respected friend mistake his powers and his *rôle*. "He 's a good man, at any rate," some one said, at the time, in John Dillon's presence. "No," said Dillon, "he 's a good child." Lalor, however, who had held angrily aloof from Mitchel, now came on the stage, and was a genuine revolutionary force. It was agreed that each of the contributors to the *Felon* should sign his articles, and Lalor speedily became the leading spirit, and stamped his policy broadly on the journal. It neither

* After Martin's arrest, Lalor wrote to the Under-Secretary to declare that some of the articles charged against him were published in opposition to his express wishes; and he and Reilly offered to take the responsibility of their own writings, in which these articles were included.

agreed with Martin's nor with Mitchel's. Martin still held by the doctrine of Davis, that we ought to elevate the whole nation together; while Lalor thought the gentry were irreconcilable, and ought to be expelled from the country. Mitchel had insisted on the futility of preparation; but Lalor refused to proceed a step till careful and elaborate preparation was made, and he asserted his individual position by printing in the *Felon* the original plan of his policy, which Mitchel had adopted, and identifying it as his own.*

Before Martin's paper was ready to be launched, the most energetic of the Dublin students started a weekly journal called the *Tribune*. Among the contributors were Dr. Antisell, who afterwards distinguished himself as a man of science in America; another young chemist of vigorous and disciplined intellect, who was in the service of the State; Mr. De Courcy Young, who finally found a home in Australia; Mr. John Savage, who has made for himself a notable career in America; and a couple of doctors who are still practising in Dublin; and Williams, best known as "Shamrock," of the *Nation*. The writing was raw and immethodic, but it was very much in earnest, and doubtless formidable on that account. The joint proprietor with Williams was Kevin O'Doherty, then a medical student, now a successful doctor and a leading politician in Queensland,

It was at this time that the chronic impediment to reunion at length gave way. John O'Connell intimated to O'Brien that he was ready for a reconciliation on

* The document cited at page 474.

the most accommodating terms. Whether the collapse of the Repeal Association, or the new enthusiasm which confronted him everywhere, influenced him to take this course, I cannot undertake to determine. While O'Brien was considering how much of this unexpected overture he was at liberty to communicate to his friends, the facts reached us from another correspondent. Dr. Cane wrote to me :—

"Smithwick* has shown me a paper, dated May 30th, a copy of which I enclose—part of a letter 'J. O'C.' wrote to 'S. O'B.' We should at once go back—he cedes all we asked for in 1846; and now is the hour to organise every parish in Ireland, which can be done only through Conciliation Hall. Organise for 'educational purposes' every parish; a club with a president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary; for every fifty members an usher, and for every ten a monitor. Such an organisation can be achieved within a month, and will be understood at once by both country and Government, and will be most effective, *however* Repeal is to be won. And for every county and its city an inspecting warden should centralise, and superintend the whole. This organisation once fully carried out, the Hall can promulgate our plan for the Council of Three Hundred, to which plan every club must pledge itself and work accordingly; then, biding a fitting time, the Council can meet, backed by a united and organised nation, and all is right. Depend on it, you cannot do this through the Confederation; the priests will not respond, and without them the rural districts will not move unanimously."

John O'Connell's note was very specific :—

"I would readily consent," he said, "that the old foundation —that dating from April, 1840 (more than eight years ago)—

* Dr. Cane's letter was received on the 1st June, 1848. Mr. Smithwick was a local brewer and landowner, who adhered to Conciliation Hall.

should be the only one to be maintained, and that no species of test, save an honourable understanding of acquiescence in its principles, should exist. I would also consent to any form of words you might propose to exclude place-begging, and also to any minor changes you might think necessary. All I should ask is that direct incentives to war be avoided; and this simply for the safety of the Association."

Thus all the petty precautions which had been insisted upon with so much passion and wrath, were abandoned. At a time when Peace Resolutions, if the principle they represented was a sound one, would have been necessary and well timed, they were completely relinquished. When men were notoriously preparing for war, no pledges were to be asked. What a judgment this fact carries on the Secession, the Remonstrance flung in the gutter, and the expulsion of so many able and honourable men on the pretence of urgent and overmastering necessity!

A conference speedily met, which had good prospects of accomplishing its purpose. It sat at the *Freeman's Journal* office, and for several successive days debated the terms of reunion. My belief at the time was that all the delegates desired, and honestly laboured for, a successful result. The conditions which had long made union impossible were all abandoned as untenable in the face of current events, and the basis of a new association, to be called the Irish League, was laid. The prospect of a union was received with unbounded satisfaction throughout the country, and the Confederates had the consolation of seeing not only bishops like Dr. Blake and Dr. Maginn, who were their personal

friends, but Dr. Cantwell and Dr. Browne, who had denounced them as dangerous infidels, welcoming them into the new organisation. Meetings of approval were held in the principal towns, and upwards of two hundred priests sent in their adhesion. Nor did the project want the negative sanction which the opposition of false Nationalists would give it; Mr. John Reynolds and Mr. Talbot, father-in-law of Under-Secretary Redington, loudly disapproved of any concession to Young Ireland. There was no demur in the national press, but the two journals hired to support the Castle, assailed it in every number. "Robbery, rape, and arson," the *Post* declared, were the blessings provided by the League for the inhabitants of the metropolis. At length the conditions of reunion were finally settled, and the delegates undertook to obtain the sanction of their respective societies to them. The Committee of the Repeal Association and the Council of the Confederation accepted the terms, and ordered that public meetings should be called to confirm them.*

* O'Brien having met with an accident was obliged to leave town before the business was completed, and Mr. T. M. Ray communicated the result of the last meeting. In a letter dated Corn Exchange, June 8, 1848, he says, "According to your request I enclose a list of our Committee, statements of liabilities, and list of the present staff and salaries. The property of the Association is as you have seen it. I think everything is nearly in the same state still: a list can be made out if requisite, but it will take time. We had an adjourned meeting of the Conference last night, and reports were given in from the respective Committees that the proposition for reunion, as presented by the former Conference, had been agreed to. On the part of the Confederation a clause was required against the introduction of questions of a religious nature, and one of a distinct disclaimer on the part of the members against taking or asking place for themselves or others." The remainder of the letter deals with a question in which he was personally interested. He proceeds to say that the Confederates desired to have Joint-Secretaries,

Men of honour will not need to be told that in these negotiations there was no denial or renunciation of the ultimate aim which the Confederates had in view. It was not offensively paraded, which would have been a provocation to disunion; but O'Brien, before John O'Connell sought him, had been tried for sedition because he declared his intention, if our national rights were denied, to seize them by force, and while the negotiations were proceeding he reiterated this sentiment. Some London journals assailed the Old Irelanders for abandoning the doctrine of moral force, and Mr. John O'Connell's special organ, the *Pilot*, justified him, not by denying the fact, but by pleading that the time for moral force was gone by, when the Government had framed a law prohibiting liberty of speech, and packed juries to convict men under it. Mr. O'Brien's object, the same journal declared, was prudently to mass the whole nation that they might be able to meet a danger which seemed imminent.*

but that he would not consent, as one responsible head was necessary in this department. He would either fulfil faithfully his duties to the new organisation, or he would resign to allow another to be appointed. He adds, as a postscript, "I have just seen Mr. Duffy, and he tells me he has spoken to some members of the Council, who do not think my objections unreasonable, and that they will agree to Mr. Halpin being Assistant-Secretary."

* In a letter of O'Brien's which was published during the negotiations he said, "I should deeply regret the proposed union if I could persuade myself that it would tend to check the bold course of policy which has been adopted, after full deliberation, by the Irish Confederation. These apprehensions have, however, been removed on discovering that the progress of events has produced a much nearer approximation of feeling and of opinion than was believed to exist between the Confederates and the members of the Repeal Association. Both parties now admit that we stand upon the 'last plank' of the constitution. No one denies that Ireland is now ruled solely by military power. 'The Union' is now undeniably maintained—not by the bonds of affection and interest, but by a

When the proceedings had reached this stage, Mr. John O'Connell astounded us by a new difficulty. He had received a warning that he was on a wrong path from a person "whose importance could not be overrated;" and he required a fortnight for further consideration, and to ascertain the opinion of the country. A fortnight wasted at such an era was a grievous loss; but the Confederates bore it good-humouredly. They utilised the interval in founding Clubs; as Clubs—so it was conditioned—were to be kept entirely separate from the League. How Mr. John O'Connell employed it is a matter of conjecture; but at the close of the fortnight he announced that he would not join the League, but retire for a time from public life. He was charged at the moment with being a tool of Lord Clarendon's to keep separate the priests and the Confederates; but it is possible that he was merely influenced by doubt and trepidation, for his mind was as unsteady as a quagmire. Whatever was his motive, that day's work was the most unfortunate

system of force, fraud, and corruption. Even our marts of commerce and our seats of learning are occupied by a foreign soldiery. Events, events, not arguments, have cancelled the famous 'peace resolutions.' Our controversy will soon narrow itself into the single question, now often uttered with impatience—'*When shall the Irish nation strike?*' Upon this question we ought to invite the deliberation of men who are cautious as well as resolute. In the language of one of your youthful poets—

* * * "Your worst transgression
Were to strike, and strike in vain."

The advocates of what is called 'moral force' tell us—and I believe them—that, if ever it should become necessary to vindicate the trampled rights of their country by an appeal to arms, they will be found amongst the foremost in the field. Shall we refuse to enter into confederacy with these men, for the purpose of considering how we can best concentrate the national energies in support of the national cause?" Cahirmoyle, June 1.

and disastrous in his mischievous career. It alarmed the timid and gave the corrupt a pretence for spreading doubt and confusion. For it withdrew from the cause a name, which still swayed the masses, as the name of the Emperor swayed the French peasantry when he was nearly a generation in his grave. On the same day an event happened in Paris which influenced the fate of Ireland perhaps as decisively as the flight of Louis Philippe. A hundred thousand workmen rose in arms against the Republic, and demanded the organisation of Socialism. They fought with desperation; and there was an enormous slaughter of soldiers and insurgents. But one death created more consternation than the destruction of a regiment. The Archbishop of Paris, who visited the scene of the insurrection to make peace between the belligerents, was shot at a barricade; and his death not only disgusted the clergy, but alarmed and alienated the middle class, throughout Europe. The same Jacobin spirit exhibited itself somewhat earlier in the Pope's dominions; his concessions were mocked at by men who would be content with nothing but a Republic. Lord Clarendon's mercenaries of the press turned these incidents to immediate account. How wicked the men must be with whom John O'Connell refused to act! How plain it was that O'Brien and Meagher were thirsting to follow in the track of Barbes and Blanqui! Would not they too murder Archbishops if they got an opportunity? It was expressly written in one or other of the organs of law and order, that Smith O'Brien held with Proudhoun,

that "property was robbery," that John Mitchel, notwithstanding his vaunting, was a cowardly wretch who "deemed it expedient to place not only his own lucubrations, but those of the correspondents of the *United Irishman* "War Department," and all, under the surveillance of a lawyer, in order to escape the meshes of the law," that John Martin had "no touch of compunction or the least inkling of religion in him," that Gavan Duffy "had the candour to announce that his object was a Red Republic, and his doctrines Blanqui's to a T," and that the Confederates had issued the command for individual assassination, as well as general pillage.

The gentry scarcely needed these transactions to make up their minds. They finally determined not to disturb the Union. A declaration in support of the existing system was circulated, and received many signatures; but as it was never published the number is uncertain. The Confederates knew these gentlemen imperfectly; but still less did they know us. Had they helped to set up Ireland anew, we would have been cut to pieces rather than any wrong should be done them. But an aristocracy, like a standing army, is a costly, and not an indispensable, luxury. They could not make up their minds to run any risk, though they stood between two dangers, one of which was inevitable. They did nothing, and for the permanent interest of their order it was an imbecile policy. If a revolution had prospered, one of the first acts of a successful general would probably have been to suspend the payment of rent, and order the people to take possession of the land and fight

hard to keep it. The revolution did not prosper, but their fall was only postponed. Their estates were eaten up by poor-rates, spent upon able-bodied paupers, who were doing no work; and before five years Parliament struck them mercilessly. Thirty peers, more than thirty baronets or knights, a score of members or ex-members of Parliament, and a long line of ancient gentry—as antiquity is counted in a country where title-deeds for the most part date from the siege of Drogheda or the fall of Limerick—were turned out of their possessions, like so many exterminated tenants, at the stroke of the auctioneer's hammer in the Encumbered Estates Court. Other heavy blows followed, and after half a century of agitation by a people to whom they never made one great or generous concession, what is the result? They scarce hope to remain as annuitants without political influence or authority, in a country which they might have led and ruled.*

Not a moment was lost in pushing the organisation in the country. Every leading Confederate undertook a mission to a district where he could be most useful; and no exhortation was spared, which sincerity

* An Irish squire once told me a story intended to account in a jolly, jocose spirit for the miserable training of the Irish militia, which throws an awkward light also, I think, on the miserable training of Irish squires in the duties and arts which win popular affection. An inspecting officer, so the story ran, was disgusted with the state of a regiment in the West, and when his inspection was over sent for the drill-sergeant. "These men of yours, sergeant," he said, "could scarcely hit a target as big as the Tower of London; you can't have taken any pains to teach them to shoot." "Teach them to shoot!" cried the sergeant. "Of course I didn't, your honour. Bedad, sir, if I taught them to shoot, there would not be a landlord left in the country." If English squires ran no risk of being shot by English militiamen is it quite certain the difference resided in the militia and not in the squires?

or enthusiasm could suggest, to keep the popular feeling high and confident. John Pigot abridged from the best authorities "Easy Lessons in Military Matters," and another correspondent, who knew more of war than the "bookish theoric," came to his aid.*

The moment it became certain that the negotiations for union had failed, the Government resolved to strike the Confederates while they were isolated. It was determined to arrest all the leaders who had brought themselves within the Treason-Felony Act, and to ask

* The muse of song addressed to every taste in turn the exhortation that liberty was to be had at the old historic price. Of the high heroic mood, this was the key-note, by Speranza:—

"Oh! that I stood upon some lofty tower,
Before the gathered people face to face,
That like God's thunder might my words of power
Roll down the cry of freedom to its base!
Oh! that my voice, a storm above all storms,
Could cleave earth, air, and ocean, rend the sky
With the fierce earthquake-shout, 'To arms! to arms!
For truth, fame, freedom, vengeance, victory!'"

Or this, from an English sympathiser, Mr. Linton:—

"Not 'Peace'!—our thoughts be steel'd:
Better than peace are liberty and right.
Not peace, but deadliest fight;
No peace, till life is free;
Better is death than slavery:
Death on the field!"

The familiar or colloquial took some such turn as this:—

"My pike is long, my pike is strong;
My countrymen rely on 't;
When foemen come I'll push it home,
And die, or they shall die on 't."

Or this (which was a prodigious favourite), by Alexander Meehan, a young barrister from Derry:—

"Ah, my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the fray—
Waiting for the sunlight dancing,
Where the bristling pikeheads glancing,
With the rifles alternating—
Ranks in green and gray.
Ah, my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the fray."

But a touch of humour, especially an *equivoque* (which takes the audience into partnership in the joke), carries the Irish heart by storm,

additional powers from Parliament to reach those who had not. They began with the journalists. On Saturday, July 9th, when I returned home for dinner, a party of detectives arrested me at my residence, and carried me in a close carriage to College Street police-office. When I arrived there I learned that the *Nation* office had been seized at the same time, and a search made for compromising papers; and that, finding none, the police carried off the account-books and office memoranda.

and a new version of the Shan Van Vocht, by Doheny, was on every tongue—

"What must the people do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
What must the people do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
What should the people do?
But treat the hireling crew
To a touch of Brian Boru?
Says the Shan Van Vocht."

One chorus became a favourite, perhaps, from its preternatural baldness; as a very bad pun has more success than a middling one:—

"Here's a chorus, Irish slave,
Buy a rifle, buy a rifle;
Precious freedom you may have,
For a trifle, for a trifle!"

"This may not be poetry," said the *Nation*, "but it is excellent sense, and we emphatically say 'Amen' to it." There was a companion lyric by another hand:—

"My rifle in flannel is stretched by the fire,
Just like an old woman of ninety-eight;
And I cannot eat,
For my heart is grown sick of stifled desire,
Eire mo stoir!
My pike has grown rusty—its handle moth-eaten;
I fear I shall die of expectancy soon;
But the harvest moon
Will give it a colour, or see me well beaten,
Eire mo stoir!"

There were several harvest songs, of which this verse, by Darcy McGee is a specimen:—

"Look on this harvest of plenty and promise—
Shall we sleep while the enemy snatches it from us?
See where the sun on the golden grain sparkles!
Lo where behind it the Pauper's home darkles!
Hark the cry ringing out—'save us, oh save,
God has been Bountiful—Man must be Brave!'"

I was duly committed for trial, and sent to Newgate in custody of a large body of police. By this time an immense crowd had collected, and as we could only drive to the prison at a walking pace it constantly increased. It was so dense when we reached Capel Street that the carriage came to a standstill, and a fierce shout arose, "Take him out! take him out!" A president of a club well known to me got on the steps and whispered, "Do you wish to be rescued?" I replied, "Certainly not!" I had the same problem to face in my own case which we had faced recently in Mitchel's, and I treated it in the same way. The crowd became very menacing, and the officer in command of the police appealed to me to quiet them. McGee and Dr. Callan, on my behalf, entreated them to desist, and warned them that the time for action had not come. After a parley, which occupied half an hour, a passage was at length cleared to the prison, and a minute after I found myself within its iron grasp. The same evening John Martin drove to the police-office, and surrendered himself. A warrant for his arrest had issued before the third number of the *Felon* appeared, and as a Dublin Commission was then sitting it was doubtless intended to make short work of him. But as it was not desirable to precipitate another crisis, Martin concealed himself, and published a letter dated "From my hiding-place," stating his intention to keep clear of Newgate till the Commission adjourned.* As it had now adjourned, he

* It was a perfectly proper and reasonable course to take. But had it been taken by Dillon or myself it would have been a subject of misrepresentation by Jacobin writers from that day to this.

gave himself up immediately. On Sunday, O'Doherty and Williams, proprietors of the *Tribune*, were brought to prison, and we learned that the police had pillaged their office, and carried off the MSS. of all the numbers published.

On Monday Doheny was arrested at Cashel for sedition, and committed to the Bridewell; the people desired to rescue him, but he dissuaded them from the attempt, and as he was admitted to bail the excitement subsided. On Tuesday Meagher was arrested in his father's house at Waterford. Of all the Confederates Meagher was the darling of the multitude; for youth, courage, and eloquence are gifts which win the popular heart. The news spread like a conflagration. The church bells were rung, his special partisans, "the Ballybracken men," hurried into town, where the bulk of the population already crowded the streets. The route to Dublin lay over a long, narrow, wooden bridge which spans the Suir. The Club men insisted that he must be rescued forthwith, and Waterford occupied for his protection. As a beginning, this bridge was barricaded with huge logs of timber, and all traffic stopped. But Meagher, like his comrades, would not consent to begin an insurrection till the word of command came from head-quarters. He had been placed in a travelling carriage guarded by a troop of Light Dragoons and a company of Fusiliers. He mounted on the top of this vehicle, where he could be seen and heard by the vast multitude, and exhorted them to desist; but they held their ground sullenly. At last

he ordered the members of his own Club to remove the barricade. "We must obey," they said, "but we fear you will be sorry for it, sir." It has been sometimes argued by inconsiderate persons that a good chance of successful resistance was thrown away by Meagher not letting the people take the course they proposed. But it is a delusion to suppose that any such chance existed at that time and place. Through the centre of Waterford runs the noble Suir; its quay, which almost rivals the quay of Lyons in commercial convenience, is lined by the chief warehouses and places of business in the city; and behind them the population cluster like a human hive. On the river, within gunshot, within stonethrow indeed, lay three war-steamers, the *Dragon*, the *Merlin*, and the *Medusa*, which could bombard the town with absolute impunity. Without powerful artillery Waterford could not have been held for an hour, if the whole population were in arms to defend it; and the people had not a gun or a mortar. Meagher persisted; the barricade was removed; and he proceeded to Dublin in custody, and was there admitted to bail.

On Wednesday McGee was arrested in Wicklow for language spoken at a local meeting, and with him Mr. Holywood, the silk-weaver, who had been sent to Paris on the Irish deputation. It was at first proposed to try them at the assizes then sitting, but the case could not be got ready in time, and they were set free on the usual sureties.

Newgate was under the control of the Dublin Cor-

poration, and the State prisoners were treated with liberality and consideration. We dined together in my room, our dinner being supplied from a hotel, and a prison servant was appointed to wait on us. Friends whom we desired to see were admitted during the day without restriction, and the conferences of the Confederation were, in effect, held in Newgate from that time forth. The doors of the prison were left as wide open to all comers as the gates of the Phœnix Park; Lord Clarendon perhaps wanted to make sure who were sympathisers with the prisoners. Martin and I wrote for our journals as usual, and continued the political correspondence with friends at a distance by which a party is kept in harmony. The publication of the *Tribune* stopped, no one being ready to carry it on in the absence of the proprietors. But that the motive might not be misunderstood, they issued, in the other prosecuted journals, the prospectus of a new weekly paper, to be called the "*Newgate Calendar*, successor to the *Tribune*," and announced that the journalists, who were their fellow-prisoners, would be contributors to it.

The officers of the prison had been appointed by the old Corporation, and were chosen because they had friends rather than because they were fit for the position. The Governor, Mr. Smyth, was a gentle, benevolent, feeble old man, who would not willingly hurt a fly, scarcely a wasp, I think; but the Deputy-Governor, Mr. Bourne, was a born jailer of the old bad type. Watchful, suspicious, indifferent to the feelings of

prisoners, and loving the cruel exercise of exceptional authority.

In our muster of Confederates in Newgate there was one busy brain missing. After Father Kenyon's decisive share in the conspiracy, he returned to his parish, and we saw in the newspapers that he had made a submission to his bishop, but the special terms of it no one suspected at that time. He had promised in effect to withdraw from the movement, and that if he ever returned to it, he would first resign his parish. It was but three weeks since he had been a party to transactions for which he and his comrades were liable to be hanged. There were missionaries in New York committing treason with his consent and concurrence, and he made this new and conflicting compact without communicating a tittle of it to the men with whom he was acting. Rumours of what had happened got abroad, and it was stated in the Castle press that he had retired from Irish politics, but he denied the report peremptorily.* Priests owe obedience in the first instance to their ecclesiastical superiors; but they know this obligation, and there is no law of honour which will justify a man in undertaking duties if they are essentially incompatible. Ignorant of his new engagement, Martin and I wrote a joint letter summoning him to town on behalf of all his comrades, and sent it by a special messenger, a kinsman of Martin's, to Templederry. Here is the answer we received:—

"Mercury will inform you how I have striven and how I

* His letter of denial will be found in the first number of the *Irish Tribune*.

have failed to enable myself to comply with the wishes of so many friends. I cannot go up at present, unless I should resign my benefice, and that I am not prepared to do unless in the very last extremity. I can only, therefore, pray God to guide you and all of us out of our pressing straits, through death if need be, to some endurable condition of being."*

It is hard to misdoubt a man of vigorous intellect and clear judgment, on whose brain there is no cloud. We interpreted this letter charitably, and were still persuaded, though he held back at the moment, that when "the very last extremity," of which he spoke had arrived, he would be found in the place which he was pledged to occupy. His temporary defection, as it appeared, was compensated for by an unexpected reinforcement.

Dr. Maginn, who had remonstrated with me, in a friendly way, at the time of the Secession, had come gradually to agree more and more with the Seceders. After the French revolution he became impatient for action; and one day—so one of his priests assured me—mooted the proposal that he and they should go to a gunsmith's in Derry, and openly buy rifles. We knew of his growing sympathy, but he had not committed himself in any way before the arrests. One morning Dr. Gray came to me in Newgate, and told me that the bishop, who was then in Dublin, authorised him to assure me that if the insurrectionary movement

* The remainder of the letter advises that a demand for money on a large scale, and on startling and suggestive grounds, should be made in a proclamation signed by our leading Confederates without loss of half a day. But the Confederation during its entire career only received £916, of which nearly half was contributed by members of the council. It was from our prosperous kinsmen in America alone that we could get adequate funds; which he himself, a little before, was willing to go in search of.

were postponed for three months, till the harvest would be stored, he would join it himself with twenty officers in black uniforms. I asked Dr. Gray if this offer expressed his own intentions; he replied he was a messenger merely in the transaction; I rejoined that it was a business too momentous to be negotiated with any but principals. The same overture was made by the same intermediary to O'Brien. He replied that things had been brought to such a pass that he must fight; as to the time, that did not depend upon him, but primarily on the Government; for himself, the most he hoped in the distracted state of the country was an honourable grave. A little later, as the prospect grew darker, two young priests, whom I had never seen before, visited me in Newgate to make a gallant proposal. As the national editors were in prison, and their successors threatened with arrest, they suggested that certain young priests, themselves to begin, should take the place of the imprisoned publicists and carry on their work. I told them that to my thinking there would soon be no longer any national press to conduct; we had arrived at a point where the Government must extinguish it, or abandon their other measures of suppression. I indicated, however, a place where the service of young priests would soon be in request, and be eminently useful. One of these young ecclesiastics was Dr. Barry, afterwards Principal of St. Patrick's College, Melbourne. The other was Dr. Croke, the present Archbishop of Cashel.

Among the prisoners in Newgate there were two

American sympathisers, R. F. Ryan, a member of the Maryland bar, and editor of the *Irish American*, and James Bergin, in whom some of the prisoners found such a resemblance to Shakespeare that they insisted he was a personage in disguise, and fixed upon him the name of General Shields. These republicans were the despair of the prison authorities. Before sunset the détenus under the Suspension Act were mustered for exercise. Mr. Bergin, who was big and broad-chested, and gifted with a voice like a trumpet, made the old walls ring one evening with the "Star-spangled Banner." The Deputy-Governor forbade this disedifying recreation; but the American citizen declared that unless he were gagged he would not refrain from honouring his country. From that time forth the sun never set upon Newgate without the Irish Americans leading a chorus in which the prisoners joined *con furore*:—

> "Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
> And this be our motto, 'In God is our trust;'
> And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
> O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

It was in the midst of the arrests that the Irish League held its first meeting. The younger members of the Repeal Committee, engaged in the recent negotiations, served on its council, but the seniors held back,*

* A shrewd friend of mine tells a story which he thinks might put Irish factions, then and since, to shame. He was visiting a lunatic asylum, he says, and was amazed to see the doctor of the institution walking about fearlessly through a hall full of confirmed madmen. "How can you trust yourself," he whispered, "with these people? they might make an end of you in a twinkling." "Pooh, pooh!" replied the experienced officer, "no two of these people ever unite."

and Mr. John O'Connell recreated himself by a journey to the Continent; having first ordered Conciliation Hall to be shut up and barricaded, lest the men who had created it should enter into possession. O'Brien was not present; he thought the urgent duty of the hour was to ascertain with certainty the state of public feeling in the provinces, and he resolved to complete the review of the national party in Munster, which had been interrupted by the affray at Limerick. The state of public feeling was of all facts the one upon which it was most important to make no mistake.

A new and urgent danger arose during his absence. The Government determined to suppress the Clubs. They had multiplied rapidly during the last month, and now numbered a hundred and fifty, representing nearly fifty thousand men. We had proposed to make them the constituency for the Council of Three Hundred. They might be recognised as our chief strength by the enmity they excited. The Castle press assailed them in every publication, and often by two or three articles in each. A memorial to the Lord-Lieutenant, signed by five-and-thirty Peers and a long list of members of Parliament, called for their immediate suppression. The *Evening Mail*, which had been flirting with nationality for two or three years, exhorted the Government to put aside the form of law and put them down peremptorily by force. The genuine passion of the people, which in a great crisis is as real and terrible as elemental fire, was found in the Clubs alone; the League was too new and too uncertain of its position to count for much, and

the Confederation was no more. They did not include, or perhaps represent, the majority of the nation, but the union of a whole people is a mere figure of speech; nearly all that was formidable to England, or hopeful to Ireland, was concentrated in them. If they could be suppressed we would be defeated as effectually as by the loss of a pitched battle. In an article written from Newgate, and bearing my initials, I recommended the people to meet the threatened aggression by immediate precautions. Each Club ought within a week to plant another Club in a new district; each member ought to bring in a new member. Within a fortnight this might be done, and they would represent a force comparable to the Volunteers of '82, and might still succeed by negotiation. But if the Clubs were dispersed by bâton or bayonet, we would only succeed by a long and bloody war; for every step in retreat costs a nation a multitude of lives, by strengthening the confidence of its enemies. The same race, almost the same generation, who lived in Ireland when she won her independence in '82, lived in it when she lost it in 1800. But the organisation was gone, for she had consented to disband the Volunteers. Armed and organised England negotiated with her—disarmed and disorganised she spurned her like a beggar, and whipped her like a slave. The cycle of time had brought us back the same events. Ireland was again organised; her strength was again regimented and disciplined; and she was again commanded to fling it away, and submit with naked hands to her oppressor. If she consented the

parallel would be complete to the last stripe of the scourge.*

The organisation of the country went on rapidly. A week after their arrest, Meagher and Doheny held a prodigious meeting on Slievenamon. The attendance was computed at fifty thousand men—there were no women or children; and up in the mountain solitude they were told, without circumlocution, to prepare for fighting. During the same week there were meetings of ten thousand men in Meath, and ten thousand in Limerick, for the same purpose. O'Brien's career in the south and the south-west was a continuous triumph. He had gone down to feel the pulse of the country, and he found, as he believed, that it beat passionately for action. Everywhere the people met him in immense multitudes. The most popular of the Catholic gentry and a notable section of the clergy tendered him their respect and sympathy. In the state of Europe, in the temper of the country, these meetings looked like the muster of an insurrectionary army.

It was now ten days since the arrests had commenced, and the Government were prepared for another stroke. A proclamation was issued ordering all persons who

* In England many persons were scandalised at such articles being dated from Newgate, and bearing the initials of State prisoners. The Government were called upon to explain this breach of propriety, and they explained it in a manner which, it may be feared, has before and since enabled a Government to evade the stringency of an Irish interrogatory. Lord Lansdowne assured the House of Lords that there was reason to believe those articles were written outside the prison and not by the persons whose initials they bore! These identical articles were afterwards included in the indictments against the gentlemen who, it was suggested, had not written them, by the Government which made the generous suggestion.

lived in proclaimed districts, and were not specially exempt, to give up their arms and ammunition within four days, on penalty of a year's imprisonment with hard labour. Dublin, Cork, Waterford, and Drogheda were immediately proclaimed, to bring them within the operation of this order. The necessary counsel on such an occasion could only be given in open and advised defiance of the law; and Martin wrote an article, signed with his initials, advising the people to keep their arms.* I did the same. I told them plainly that if the Clubs and arms were yielded up, with them our prestige would vanish, and Ireland would be beaten, though not a cartridge was burned. For power does not reside in numbers or equipment, but mainly in self-reliance. Naked hands and an armed soul are stronger than a hireling spirit braced in steel.

"For myself," I said, "if the people are robbed of their arms—if the Clubs are broken up—if all the organisation and discipline won with such toil are flung away in an hour—if the spirit of the country, so miraculously evoked, be again permitted to die out—if these things can happen after the terrible lessons we have before us, written in the blood and tears of the nation, I, for one, will not curse the packed jury that sends me far from such a spectacle."

When the proclamation ordering the people to give up their arms was posted in Waterford, Meagher, who had just returned from Slievenamon, issued a counter-proclamation, advising them to disregard the Castle, to organise calmly, speedily, and fearlessly, and to await

* It was for this article Martin was afterwards convicted.

the advice of their leaders. The same evening he left his father's home, which he saw for the last time.

Since the arrests, the course proper to be taken in case of a conviction was the subject of constant consultations among the leaders—consultations held sometimes with the prisoners in Newgate, sometimes at the residence of O'Brien or Dillon. Several Confederates insisted that another trial like Mitchel's would greatly inflame the national spirit. There is no tribune, they said, like the dock in Green Street, and no missionaries like martyrs. But others, the majority I believe, were of opinion that the people would grow accustomed to see their leaders sacrificed, as they had grown accustomed to deaths by famine, and that the Government must not be allowed to carry off another victim. The longer the trials could be postponed the better; all the law's delays must be employed; but an adverse verdict ought, they considered, to be the signal for resistance.

On O'Brien's return from the south, the Council met to receive his report. On the same evening* a meeting of Club delegates was held, that the state of preparedness in each Club might be ascertained. O'Brien sat at the head of the table with a list of the metropolitan Clubs before him. When the secretary named a Club, the delegates came forward and reported the number of members, the quantity of arms, whether it was divided into sections and sub-sections, and the state of opinion.

Three days later, when Dublin was proclaimed and the people required to deliver up their arms, another

* July 17th.

conference of Club delegates was summoned to consider the situation. Brenan suggested that it was better to strike at once, before the search for arms commenced, and proposed a resolution to this effect. He was a boy, still under twenty, and so vehement that his opinion carried no authority. Dillon moved an amendment that the people should be recommended to conceal their arms, and give a passive resistance to the proclamation. O'Brien was of the same opinion. McGee, incited, I conclude, more by his scorn of Jacobin suspicions than by his deliberate judgment, proposed that the leading Confederates should draw lots which of them would that night, at a public meeting of the Confederation, advise that the proclamation should be resisted. Dillon's proposal was adopted by a small majority, and the conference adjourned for two days. At the public meeting that night, O'Brien declared that he found in Cork and Kerry a unanimous feeling that a simultaneous effort ought to be made by the nation to secure its freedom. At Cork he met ten thousand Confederates as capable of effectual action as any troops in the Queen's service, and ten thousand other able-bodied men, who promised to co-operate with them. And reports from other districts assured him that the feeling was widespread. But, for the sake of the Old Irelanders who were about to enter the Irish League, he would be as moderate as was consistent with his duty to the country. All this bore a close resemblance to O'Connell's talk at the monster meetings; but his audience knew there was one essential difference—

O'Brien's language represented his actual feelings and intentions.

At the adjourned meeting of the Club delegates Dillon presided. As the League was not to be responsible for the Clubs, it was necessary to give them a special executive to which they would yield obedience; and to choose it was the chief business of this meeting. But as it might give the signal for insurrection, it would become, in fact, the supreme council of the movement. Mr. Lalor read a letter from Mr. Gavan Duffy, recommending that one of the five chosen should be a priest, and suggesting Fr. Kenyon, Fr. Hughes, and Fr. Thaddeus O'Malley as a list from which a choice might be made. It was as plain to me then as it is now that the peasantry would not fight in opposition to their local clergy unless other priests were seen in the ranks of the insurgents. Priests might make effective soldiers; they had done so in 1643 and in 1798. They had done so in Spain, New Spain, and in Belgium. The insurrection in Mexico, from which sprang the deliverance of the New World, was organised by a priest, Mignet Hidalgo, who led the rising in person; and it was carried to its highest military success by another priest, Morelos, aided as lieutenant by a third priest, Metamoros. This counsel did not prevail. Out of twenty-nine who voted, only eight votes were given to Fr. Kenyon, and a smaller number to Fr. O'Malley. The choice fell upon Dillon, Meagher, O'Gorman, and McGee; there was an equality of votes for Lalor and Devin Reilly; and on a second ballot the latter was

chosen. The preference was not a judicious one. Lalor more than any one had given the struggle the character it was unfortunately destined to assume of a peasant war; and he was possessed of the dogged desperation which is one essential element in insurrection. Reilly did not, either before or after his election, prove to possess any gift serviceable in such an enterprise, except the passionate intellectual vehemence which made him a successful journalist. O'Brien, who was not present, was omitted from the list by his own desire, as his special duties would take him next morning to Wexford, to continue his inspection of the south.

In America, before the arrival of our delegates, there were public meetings of sympathy with Ireland. The feeling must have been widespread which united in one committee John Van Buren, Benjamin Butler, and Horace Greeley. The Irish of all classes gave freely from their earnings, and it was then there commenced to flow another stream which has never run dry. The working people of both sexes contributed half-a-million sterling to bring out their relatives and friends from a famine-stricken country to the security of a prosperous one, and have gone on contributing through all the intervening years.*

* No event in Ireland is too serious, or too tragic, not to have its good story. Men could not refrain from laughter even in this gloomy period at an anecdote of an old Munster squire who made himself busy at a Relief Committee, too obviously, it was thought, with a view to keep down rates, and was rebuked for inhumanity to the poor in past years. "They asked for bread, sir, and you gave them a stone," cried a tribune of the people. "Not at all, sir," replied the squire, who was present, "they asked for potatoes, and I generally gave them half a stone." (In Ireland potatoes are sold by the stone weight). One hopes it was the same squire who met a

A recruit made his appearance at this time in the Confederate party, who deserves to live in the memory of his countrymen. Maurice Leyne had left Conciliation Hall after O'Connell's death, and it was understood that he refused on principle an appointment which his relatives had procured for him from the Whigs. From his political antecedents, and because of his own good gifts and honesty of purpose, he was a recruit to be desired, and I invited him to join the staff of the *Nation*, which he immediately did. The near relative of O'Connell, and a nearer heir to his genius and eloquence than the children of his house, he abandoned friends and family on a passionate impulse to fight for the old country. An insurrection was inevitable and imminent, and the clamourers were preparing to abscond or dip under, when, late in June, Leyne, quietly and without ostentation, took his place in the party of the people. Ten days later, when Martin, Williams, O'Doherty, and myself were in Newgate awaiting a speedy trial, with an *exeunt omnes* as the probable close of the scene, he grasped the fatal pen and became a journalist of the revolution.

rebuff which he could enjoy. The question of a later period was to find some substitute for the potato, and a score of substitutes were proposed by as many projectors. A squire at a local committee suggested that turnips might replace the tuber which was lost. "Don't you think, sir," he said, addressing the chairman, "that turnips would be a wholesome and nutritious food for the people?" "Certainly, sir," said the chairman, "very wholesome and nutritious—with mutton, of course." Later, when rates ran up to an amount that sometimes left the landlord no income, this dry old humourist was accustomed when he met an outdoor pauper to gravely take off his hat and respectfully recognise his master.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSURRECTION.

THE measures of the conspirators were taken three months too late. They would have been well timed in March, but in June they proved futile. The Council of Five never met. O'Gorman started next day for Limerick to prepare the south-west for action, and on the evening of the same day formidable and decisive news reached the other members.* The *Freeman's Journal* received a telegram announcing that Lord John Russell had carried through the House of Commons, without resistance, a Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. It would be law on Monday, and the popular leaders might be committed to prison and kept there at pleasure without indictment or trial.

Some of the leading Confederates met at Richard O'Gorman's warehouse on Merchant's Quay, and adjourned to the old Council-room in Dolier Street. Dillon, Meagher, and McGee, of the Council of Five, were present, and P. J. Smyth. They had to determine on the instant whether they would submit to arrest, or resist before the time had come when effectual resistance was probable. Dillon declared there was only one honour-

* Saturday, July 22.

able course open. Submission to arrest would be construed as an abandonment of the cause; flight or concealment was out of the question. He suggested that they should immediately join O'Brien. If he considered the time had come for making a stand, they might seize on Kilkenny, call the people to arms, throw up defence works, and from the old historic seat of government proclaim the independence of Ireland. The city stood on the borders of the three best fighting counties in the island—Tipperary, Wexford, and Waterford; the nearest railway by which troops could be sent against it was separated from the city by a road which was peculiarly defensible. It was narrow, flanked at some points by thick shrubberies; at others by low walls, which constituted effective breastworks, and it ran through more than one deep cutting. With the knowledge we now possess of the failure and disaster which ensued it is unfair, I think, to pronounce his decision reckless or ill-judged. The difficulties indeed were enormous. The prospect of effectual help was vague and distant, and with any help they could reasonably hope for, the chance of success was not great. But it was great enough to make it a crime to throw it away. It is sometimes necessary to fight for the honour of the flag. Ireland had passed through a second era of Mallow defiances; had it ended, like the first, in submission to a Castle proclamation, the national movement would have closed at that hour, and closed in shame. No struggle for liberty has greatly prospered which has not had willing martyrs. And now, once again, there was about to be

seen the spectacle, for ever grand and touching to the human soul, of men who in the midst of corruption and cowardice offered up their lives for the truth. And not in vain. Far from it. Whatever Ireland has since done to assert herself, anything she may be still determined to do, is traceable to that transaction as to its spring-head. A ministerial journal afterwards admitted, as a fact fit to be noted by men of honour, and to be recorded of other men of honour, that there was not one conspicuous Confederate who had encouraged the people to resistance, but staked his own head on the issue. If, in lieu of this admission, it had been recorded that none of them so staked his head, what a legacy of distrust and shame they would have bequeathed to their country! * The determination arrived at can be justified to common sense on one principle only, that patriotism has obligations which cannot be evaded without a fatal loss of individual and national honour. The *morale* of it was very simple: if England insisted on maintaining an obnoxious and destructive system, any remedy was legitimate which Englishmen would

* The *Morning Chronicle* pronounced judgment on them at the time in terms which were generous towards defeated enemies:—"The Confederation ran a career, brief indeed, but not undistinguished by the display of talent, eloquence, vigour, and determination of no common order. It fell because its tone was pitched too high for 'chronic agitation,' and because, in the Irish people, there was nothing like the material for a successful rebellion against British power. But, at least, it fell with a crash; its champions did their very best to carry all their professed designs into execution, and were themselves the first, if not the only, victims of their treasonable rashness. They were most criminal, and most foolish; but they were neither mean, nor false, nor cowardly. To do them justice, we will say that the world saw no shrinking in their ranks; there was not a single conspicuous man among the Young Ireland party who did not deliberately set his life upon the cast, and throw for a successful revolution or the gallows."

employ if England were governed from Paris, for the benefit of France.

None of the precautions I had constantly insisted upon were effectually taken. There was no central authority which could move the whole country. There was no military leader, there was no treasury or store of munitions; and our kinsmen across the Atlantic had not yet time to respond to our appeal. But I have always been of opinion that Dillon's decision was the only one open to a man of honour in the stringent circumstances of the case.

On the previous day a delegate had arrived in Dublin from the Confederates of Glasgow. They had a considerable supply of arms and ammunition, he said; and if a known leader were sent among them, 400 or 500 men would volunteer on an expedition to Ireland. They might seize a steamer on the Clyde and sail for Sligo or Killala, where the Government were unprepared, and make a diversion in the West, as unexpected and bewildering as a blow on the back of the head. On the advice of Dillon and Meagher, McGee undertook this duty, which, if skilfully performed, would make him as famous, they predicted, as Paul Jones. He sailed the same evening for Scotland. A man who in the end abandons his opinions seldom escapes odious, retrospective suspicion. But nothing in this era is more certain than that McGee did the work entrusted to him with intrepidity and tact, as we shall see later.*

* I have since learned from a Catholic clergyman of high integrity and intellect that he went through the perilous enterprise he had undertaken with singular energy and tact.—"Meagher's Memoir of '48."

These decisions were communicated immediately to the prisoners in Newgate and to O'Gorman at Limerick, and Smyth and the Secretary of the Confederation were instructed to make them known to the leaders of the Clubs. The same evening, after a hasty farewell to Dillon's young wife, they took the Wexford coach at Loughlinstown, and travelled all night to their destination. O'Brien, when they joined him, agreed that they must fight, and accepted generally the programme of Dillon. He was not too confident of success, but his honour and the honour of the country were committed; and, as he had never appealed to the people without a prompt and enthusiastic response, the attempt, he conceived, would be made under conditions not wholly unfavourable.

It is certain that he expected the rising, when a signal was given, would be simultaneous and nearly universal. And he could scarcely divest himself of the feeling of a native prince, who was summoning his obedient clans to battle. But a simultaneous rising required that there should be in a hundred places men like himself, capable of taking the tremendous resolution of beginning a civil war. Thousands would have risen on the news of a victory who dare not strike the first blow. Such a rising as took place in La Vendée, where every château sent out its lord, followed by his sons and retainers, to fight for the good cause, O'Brien would have led with chivalrous courage; but he expected and exacted from peasants an initiative, and sacrifices, which they had

never been trained to make, and of which they were wholly incapable. Had Dillon's programme succeeded, had Kilkenny been held, had a Provisional Government summoned the nation to arms in a proclamation dated from the ancient castle of the Butlers, where Owen O'Neill took counsel with Renuccini two centuries before, it is probable that as many towns and districts would have answered the appeal as came to the aid of the Supreme Council in 1643. But there was no longer any one man to whose individual convocation the whole nation would respond. There was no longer, indeed, the same people, who three or four years before had declared for legislative independence with signal unanimity. Of the men of the monster meetings half a million were in their graves, half a million had fled to England or the New World; and the patriot priests who talked of battalions, and taught the moral responsibility of soldiers, in that day, were now pledged to the Peace Resolutions.

They drove into Enniscorthy, where a public meeting was immediately summoned. The local Club—there was but one—did not muster more than a hundred and fifty members, but it represented a larger force behind. The Vice-President, Secretary, and several of the members were Protestants; and as good relations had been re-established with the Old Irelanders, they might be regarded as the advance-guard of the whole community. Being Sunday, the meeting was attended by the population generally, and a young priest of great personal influence, Fr. Parle, took a

lead in it. The people, he said, were not prepared for war, but if any attempt was made to arrest O'Brien in Enniscorthy, they would resist it on the moment. O'Brien announced in general terms the intention he had formed, and the people were greatly moved. An experienced witness assured me, at a later period, that if he had been able to carry out his design at Kilkenny, the sons of the Croppies who, in '98, swept the country bare of British troops would have come to his aid.* The little Club was tolerably armed, and had been drilled by a Confederate who had become a police constable, but was home on sick leave.†

When the popular leaders left for Kilkenny a large procession on foot and horseback accompanied them, and left them with passionate prayers for their success. Their road lay through the village of Graigue-na-Mana, where "General Cloney," who had fought with the insurgent army fifty years before, resided. He clasped O'Brien in his arms, and prayed that God might prosper his undertaking, and a procession of stout boatmen and peasants was immediately formed to escort him to Kilkenny. Dr. Cane was the spirit and soul of the movement in the City of the Confederation,‡ and

* Croppy was the designation of an Irish Republican in '98, from the practice borrowed from the French of wearing the hair close cropped. It only survives in the popular speech in a song of a frank maiden, who seems to have been in training to ecome the Vivandière of a national army :—

"'Tis I have a leg for a stocking,
And I have a foot for a shoe;
And I have a kiss for a Croppy,
And down with the Orange and Blue!"

† This was P. J. Hutchinson, of whom the reader will hear more later.

‡ The Confederation of 1641, which held its sessions in Kilkenny.

with him they immediately took counsel. His opinion was that the attempt could not be made without considerable assistance from without. The garrison had been recently strengthened, and many of the Old Irelanders were hostile; if the Kilkenny Clubs rose alone they would certainly be defeated. After much consultation it was agreed that O'Brien and his companions should visit the chief towns of Tipperary in rapid succession, and return in a few days at the head of the largest insurrectionary force they could muster. The Kilkenny Clubs undertook to co-operate with them, and their design might then be successfully executed. This course was perhaps the best the condition of things admitted of, but at that hour the first chance of success—that subtle electric force whose influence evades arithmetic—vanished away.

Early next morning they set out to commence this new task.* When they reached Callan, where their coming was anticipated, the entire population was afoot to welcome them. A band, bonfires, green boughs, and all the ordinary evidences of popular favour awaited them. They held a hasty meeting, and warned the people to be ready for a speedy summons to fight for Ireland. Many of the Royal Irish Hussars, who were stationed in the town, attended the meeting, and it was noted that they were among the most delighted of the audience.

On their way to Cashel they fell in with John O'Mahony, a gentleman farmer, living on the farm

* Monday, July 24.

of Mullough, a small paternal property, close by the Suir. He was the very type of recruit they longed to find. A good-looking young fellow, whose mien and bearing suggested a soldier in mufti, or a barrister in vacation, rather than an agriculturist. He had been educated in Trinity College, and in addition to the studies necessary for a degree had made himself a noted Celtic scholar. But from the period of the Secession his books were put aside for political work, and at this time he was president of a Club and an active organiser of the people, and was destined in the end to become a power in Irish affairs.* O'Mahony assured them that the country between Carrick and Clonmel was ready to take the field. The Club of which he was president was divided into sections, under the men fittest to be officers, and was tolerably armed. His advice was that the insurrection should begin that night at Carrick; but if they determined to return to Kilkenny, he would bring his Club, and as many of the peasantry as he could collect, to their aid.

In Carrick a memorable spectacle awaited them. Their coming had been announced, and the whole population was abroad wild with excitement. Meagher has described the scene :—

"A torrent of human beings, rushing through lanes and narrow streets, whirling in dizzy circles and tossing up its dark waves with sounds of wrath, vengeance, and defiance . . . eyes red with rage and desperation . . . wild, half-stifled, passionate,

* English readers will perhaps need to be told that John O'Mahony was afterwards the founder and leader of the famous Fenian societies in America.

frantic prayers of hope, curses on the red flag; scornful, exulting defiance of death. It was the revolution, if we had accepted it."

But enthusiasm is not enough; by itself it is flame without fuel. A conference with the local leaders was immediately held to ascertain their ways and means and disposition. This is what they had to report:—

After the French revolution, the Young and Old Irelanders in Carrick united, and a banquet was held to commemorate the event, at which the most influential of the mercantile and professional classes, and the principal farmers in the neighbourhood, attended. Eight Clubs of United Repealers were speedily enrolled, and it was estimated that they contained more than a thousand men fit to bear arms. A central committee, formed by one delegate from each Club, took control of the Carrick country, and after a little, enrolled eight other Clubs in the rural districts, which raised the available men to about three thousand. They were mostly armed, but with pikes mainly—there were not more than three hundred rifles and muskets among them. Meagher, as inspector for Munster, had visited the town in June, and come to an agreement with the leaders that they would be ready in September or October to answer a summons to arms. The morning after his visit, three young men were arrested for taking part in an illegal procession. Some impatient spirits, without waiting for the officers, authorised to take the initiative, immediately summoned the Clubs by toll of bell, and rescued one of the prisoners. After some of the presidents and secretaries had arrived, they still insisted on rescuing the

other prisoners, till they were quieted by the assurance that the offence was a bailable one, and by seeing their comrades at length restored to liberty.

Here was a district where it might well seem a beginning ought to be made.

But there is always another side to an account. The rash rescue of the Club men had attracted the attention of the Government to the district, and a regiment* was hastily marched to Bessborough and Piltown, within three miles of Carrick, where three companies of infantry and two troops of dragoons, with a large party of police, were already stationed. Twelve hundred men, it was estimated, with two howitzers and two field pieces, were in the town, or within an hour's march of it; and large reinforcements could be drawn from Waterford and Clonmel. Dr. O'Ryan and Father Byrne, the most influential of the local leaders, were of opinion that an attempt to hold Carrick would be drowned in blood. Dillon thought it ought to be held, and that Tipperary and Waterford would rise to its support. But O'Brien did not consider Carrick defensible, lying between two garrisoned cities, and he continued to rely on the arrangement made with Dr. Cane. He asked that 600 volunteers might be immediately found—within an hour, if possible—adequately armed and supplied with provision for three days, to march with him to Callan. He was confident they would be so effectually reinforced all along the route that their attack on Kilkenny would be successful. The local leaders assured him it would

* The 3rd Buffs.

be impossible to get an expedition equipped and provisioned so promptly; but if he and his friends would conceal themselves for a time, arrangements would be made with Waterford, Clonmel, and Kilkenny, for joint action as speedily as possible. O'Mahony alone insisted that a stroke ought to be struck that night, and went off for his men to give significance to his counsel. O'Brien refused to be hunted into concealment, and it was finally determined to address the immense mass of people who had gathered into the town, and ascertain what they were prepared to do. Meagher, who was very impressionable, and had been disappointed by the want of alacrity he found among the local leaders, is described as speaking in a desponding tone, which chilled his audience.* But O'Brien spoke with plain vigour. The constitution was suspended by the British Government; if the people were prepared to resist this aggression, he would stand by them. It was for them to determine, and forthwith, for he would take his course within an hour. After the catastrophe, much blame was thrown on the local leaders for having discouraged the people, as it was averred, from committing themselves to O'Brien. What alone is certain is, that at the end of an hour the three Confederates left Carrick for Cashel, determined to renew their experiment there, where there were many Confederates and few soldiers; and that they were promised co-operation from Carrick on whatever course they finally adopted. After they left a considerable force

* This is the account of the transactions in Carrick, with which the local leaders furnished me long after the event.

was observed approaching Carrick; it was found to consist of a party summoned by O'Mahony to begin action, as he had advised that night and in that place. They were ordered to disperse, and O'Mahony returned to his house to await further information and instruction.

Here, and not at Waterford on the arrest of Meagher, or at Dublin on the arrest of Mitchel, the best opportunity of striking an effective blow presented itself. Had Carrick been seized, it is probable that three counties would have risen within forty-eight hours; and that preparations for a rising would have begun over three provinces.

Before following them in this undertaking, it is necessary to return for a moment to Dublin. The secretary of the Confederation at this time was Mr. Halpin, an intelligent and honest young man, but without vigour of will or decision of character, and he performed very inadequately the duty of communicating with the Clubs. The detectives considered his father-in-law and his wife persons with whom they might successfully tamper to ascertain where the books and papers of the Confederation were concealed. They did not succeed in corrupting them, but Mr. Halpin seems to have been disturbed and paralyzed by the attempt. The want of precise information threw the Clubs into complete confusion, and he set out in a day or two for Tipperary, leaving them without any efficient channel of information.

When Dillon's confidential messenger reached me in

Newgate announcing the purpose and plan with which he and Meagher had joined O'Brien, I told John Martin, and we sent immediately for a few of our friends, among others T. B. McManus, Maurice Leyne and Devin Reilly. We advised them to follow Dillon immediately. The same communication was made confidentially to a few Club men; for if a stand were made it was of the last importance that reliable men should be at hand to serve and second the leaders. We consulted with O'Doherty and Williams, and it was agreed that we should ourselves make an effort to escape and join our friends. For every man who brought will or devotion to the cause multiplied its chances of success. I caused a rope ladder to be immediately prepared, by which we believed that, with slight assistance from outside, we could make our way out of one of the courts, which was ill-lighted, unguarded, and, for the moment, unoccupied by prisoners. The ladder was probably made of silk, for it occupied so small a space that it was brought into the prison concealed in a basket of clothes from the laundress, and secreted in a small cloak-bag in my bedroom. But where should we fly to? Day after day passed without any satisfactory, or even any certain news from the South. The newspapers were full of contradictory rumours, but an insurrection cannot conceal itself, and the news we expected was plainly not forthcoming. The fever of impatience in which we tossed would add a new horror to Dante's Purgatory. We got no letter and no news which it was possible to believe. And there was apparently no remedy. The Post-office, the railways,

and all the ordinary lines of communication were now watched by detectives; if we sent any known Confederate for information, it was certain he would not be allowed to return, and an ordinary messenger would be useless.*

It is time, however, to pass from Newgate to the scene of action, and see what actually occurred. Smyth, who had been left in charge of Dublin, but without specific instructions, and ordered to act according to circumstances, found that his immediate arrest was contemplated, and he resolved to make his way to Tipperary while it was still possible. On Sunday morning he and James Cantwell left

* On Wednesday, July 26, a *Gazette* was issued, announcing that the new act was law, and that it would be enforced against the Clubs; and well-disposed persons were exhorted to abandon them forthwith. Three days later a *Hue and Cry* was published, calling on magistrates and constables to arrest McGee, P. J. Smyth, Lalor, Brenan, Drum, sub-editor of the *Nation*, Devin Reilly, Halpin, secretary of the League, Michael Crean, Frank Morgan, solicitor to the Dublin Corporation, James Cantwell, and others; and sketches of Doheny and some of the Confederate leaders, modelled upon the descriptions of burglars and murderers, which ordinarily adorn that publication, was added for the enjoyment of loyal persons. They were stupid and silly, but it is probable that they were found highly diverting at the Tobacco-Parliament.

The more conspicuous Confederates resident in the country were speedily imprisoned. Lalor was arrested at Ballyhane on the 28th July, Dr. Cane at Kilkenny on the 29th, and the Cork Confederates three days after. On Tuesday, August 2nd, Barry was arrested at his father's house at Black Rock, and sent to the county gaol, where he was long the only political prisoner. On the same day, Derry Lane, the two Varians, Charles D. Murphy—Meagher's comrade, and younger brother of Nicholas Dan Murphy, since M.P. for Cork—Mullen, Barry's partner in the *Southern Reporter*, were arrested in the city and sent to the city gaol. Warrants were issued for other Confederates, but they evaded arrest One of them, Robert Lambkin, a prosperous manufacturer, having returned to Cork when all was over, was captured and sent to join the other Confederates. They were all released, however, after a couple of months' imprisonment. Michael McCarthy, the chief officer of the magistrates' court in Cork, a man of taste and culture, was believed by ultra-loyal persons to be too courteous and considerate of the rebels; and had doubtless a young rebel at home in the person of his son Justin, of whom the world of literature and politics was destined to hear news.

for Thurles.* After a brief conference with the Club leaders in that town, they pushed on to Cashel, and next day met O'Brien and his companions returned from Carrick. O'Brien was still confident and eager to begin. He regretted that he had not struck the first blow at Carrick; but he would delay no longer. He would hold Cashel, he declared, and summon the country to arms. Confidential messengers were dispatched to the neighbouring districts to bring in the people, and Smyth was sent back to Dublin with instructions to have the rails torn up at Thurles and in the suburbs of Dublin, and to take charge of the Drogheda and Navan Clubs with a view to a diversion in Meath. While he was waiting for the train at Thurles an incident occurred which resembled the sudden intrusion of a scene from a pantomime into the middle of a thrilling melodrama. A car drove up from the direction of Kilkenny, occupied by four men, among whom he recognised the burly figure and frowning face of Patrick O'Donohue, a noted Dublin Club man, who was manifestly in the care, if not in the custody, of his companions. "Look here, Smyth," he cried, "these d——d rascals take me for a spy, and hold me a prisoner." As this adventure marks the entrance into Irish affairs of a man afterwards very notable, I must retrace it to the beginning. The night after O'Brien left Kilkenny, a rumour spread that a detective had arrived with a warrant for his arrest. The

* James Cantwell was a mercantile assistant in the house of Alderman Kinahan (best known perhaps in connection with LL whisky), and was an intelligent and devoted Confederate.

Clubmen were in a tumult of anger and indignation. A young fellow of five-and-twenty, employed in the office of the Engineer of the Limerick and Waterford Railway, not an enrolled Confederate, but whose opinions were not in doubt, proposed that two or three of them should fall on the detective and take his warrant from him. Two of them, armed with revolvers, immediately visited the Rose Inn, where he was stopping, and found a big, black, scowling fellow, who seemed the very ideal of a police agent. They called on him to produce his warrant on penalty of summary consequences. He declared with passionate vehemence that so far from being a detective he was a partisan of O'Brien, and on his way to join him. "Very good," they said; "he's probably at Thurles, twelve miles distant; we'll get a car and drive you there. If we have been mistaken, you'll forgive our zeal in the same cause. But if you attempt to escape before we reach Thurles, we'll shoot you." They set off under the clouds of night, and had completed their journey when they fell in with Smyth in the early morning. The proposer and manager of this exploit was James Stevens, who—years later—was the Head Centre of the I.R.B.* Smyth told the new comers that they would probably find the green flag flying from the Rock of Cashel, and after a hasty conversation with some local Confederates who were instructed to render the Great Southern and Western line

* The I.R.B., or Irish Republican Brotherhood, was the official title of the conspiracy in Ireland, commonly called Fenianism; Fenianism being the name of a kindred society in the United States.

impassable, they set off in high spirits for the old historic town. Their first experience was like a cold bath. They arrived in the early morning, but instead of sentinels and watchfires, columns of sturdy peasants, carts laden with provisions, flaming smithies where strong men were hammering iron and steel into serviceable weapons, and all the picturesque incidents of peasant war which their eager fancy had painted, Cashel was like a city of the dead. No one was abroad in the streets, and it was with some difficulty they found O'Brien. The project of raising that part of the country had failed; but O'Brien was still resolved to proceed, and Stevens proffered him his assistance, and became an active agent in all the future operations.

As three towns had already declined the responsibility of striking the first blow, the Confederates agreed to fall back on the rural districts. On Tuesday morning* they proceeded to Killenaule, where a small number of the peasantry, not amounting to two hundred, met them, and, says one of the party, "showed great readiness to fight."† They were ordered to hold themselves prepared for a speedy summons; and the Confederates proceeded to Mullinahone. We have, happily, a picture of what happened at Mullinahone by a witness possessing insight and sympathy, and incapable of colouring the facts for any purpose. Charles Kickham was then a

* July 25th.

† "The reception of Mr. O'Brien was most enthusiastic: bouquets fell in showers upon him, and addresses were read for him; but that there was any improvement in the way of order or organisation, or any effective addition to his strength, I did not hear."—"Personal Recollections of the Insurrection at Ballingarry." By Rev. P. Fitzgerald.

youth of eighteen, son of a prosperous shopkeeper in the village, and already on fire with a love of country which was only extinguished with his life. A few months before his death he furnished me with this striking narrative:—*

"When the rumour reached our village, I had an ash tree cut down on the farm of one of my uncles, and carried to a carpenter's shop to make a beginning. It was encouraging to see how readily and joyfully the carpenter and his two sons flung away the work they had in hand to prepare the tree for the sawpit. It was soon converted into roughly-dressed pike handles, one of which I requested them to finish off, while I, following the instructions given in the *Nation*, fashioned a wooden model of a salmon-back pikehead. There was a forge within a few yards of the carpenter's shop, where I found the blacksmith as ready and willing as his neighbours. He had steel and Swedish iron just fit for the purpose, and, cautiously shutting and fastening the door, he set to work, and a serviceable though not yet a shining blade was fixed upon the smooth handle in a wonderfully brief space of time. It was, I believe, the first pike made in that part of Tipperary since '98. While we were admiring and handling and balancing it, the forge door was burst open, and a young farmer, his coat upon his arm, and the perspiration streaming from his face, rushed in, exclaiming breathlessly, 'Smith O'Brien and Duffy are below. They are looking for you.'

"This was another bewildering surprise, for I knew Duffy was in prison. We all ran to the town, and met Smith O'Brien coming towards us, followed by a small crowd. I had never

* Charles Kickham ripened into a popular novelist, ranking next after Carleton, Griffin and Banim, and far before Lover or Lady Morgan, as a painter of national manners; and, like them, he was a writer of racy and vigorous native verse. He became a member of Stevens's I.R.B., and was sentenced to transportation in 1866, as one of the Executive Directory of that organisation. He died prematurely in August, 1882. He was a man of amiable disposition, original powers, and unflinching patriotism.

before seen Mr. O'Brien, but knew him at once by his portrait. A tall gentleman dressed in black, and having a plaid scarf tied sashwise over his shoulder, relieved me from my embarrassment by saying, with a winning smile, 'I am Mr. Dillon.' I shook hands with him, remarking that we had never before seen any of our leading patriots in that secluded place. They turned back towards the town. O'Brien seemed to me to be like a man in a dream; while Dillon looked calm and bright and earnest. 'Don't go like a rabble,' said O'Brien; and turning to me he added, reproachfully, 'Put your Club into order.' 'There are only three members of the Club here,' I replied; and there was, I thought, something peculiar in Dillon's smile as he glanced first at me and then at the little crowd. 'Ring your bell,' O'Brien said; and he seemed to brighten up when I sprang to the chapel wall, which was about seven feet high, and got over it. I was soon relieved by some young men at the ringing, and rejoined O'Brien and Dillon, with whom I found three others, whose names I learned during the day—Pat O'Donohue, James Cantwell, and James Stephens, Mr. D. P. Cunningham (now, I believe, of the New York *Tablet*), and a few other youngsters. One Mr. J. D. Wright, a Protestant, and then a student of T.C.D., who was a rising member of the bar in America, where he died in Troy, N.Y., in the year '64, was also present. O'Brien desired that as many men as possible should come in armed; and messengers were at once sent to different parts of the parish with orders to that effect. I asked Dillon—who expressed great satisfaction at finding so much of a military spirit among us—to come with me some distance along the different roads, and point out the best places to erect barricades. He spoke to the farmers whom we met on the way, and urged them to procure arms. I thought I might as well get my own pike at the forge, but we found the way blocked up by a densely-packed crowd of men, all crushing and struggling to get pike-heads of some sort. In answer to my call, the smith (who had now as many assistants as there was room for) made his way through the crowd, and, wiping the perspiration from his face,

told me sorrowfully that my pike had been stolen; that he was 'killed' trying to hammer out any sort of pikes for the crowds who were clamouring for them, and that he 'hoped I'd excuse him.' Dillon was greatly amused by the scene at the forge. All my handles except one, which was hidden, had also been made away with from the carpenter's. Before midnight the material for a splendid brigade had answered to the summons of Smith O'Brien. It was computed that from 6,000 men, armed with fowling-pieces, impromptu pikes, and pitchforks, were drawn up and kept at rudimentary drill that night along the streets and the roads leading to the little town of Mullinahone.

They were ready to face death beyond all question. A few barricades were thrown up, but O'Brien forbade the felling of trees across the roads without the permission of the owners of the estates upon which they grew. One poor Protestant gentleman granted this permission, but remarked ruefully that the trees on the other side of the road, which belonged to a magistrate, were spared. The boys felt the force of this appeal so strongly, that only a few of the least valuable of his trees were cut down. As the morning advanced the little army began to melt away. They saw no fighting to be done—no work of any kind; and had no idea where breakfast was to be had, except under their own roofs. There was some excitement and anxiety as to what was going to happen when O'Brien walked into the police barrack, the door of which was open as if nothing unusual was going on. There was a laugh, however, among the crowd, when a big policeman put his head out of an upper window, exclaiming, 'Yerrah! sure the time isn't come yet to surrendher our arms. D'ye wait till the right time comes.' There were still some hundreds of men remaining who were near enough to their homes to have got breakfast, or who had money to buy a loaf of bread, and these escorted the leaders for a mile or so, till they were met by a party of Ballingarry men. Dillon desired the Mullinahone men to turn back. I shook hands with him and James Stevens, who sat on the same side of the car, looking cheerful and

hopeful. I also shook hands with Smith O'Brien, who looked happy and dreamy smoking a cigar." *

It was on Wednesday morning that O'Brien visited the police barrack, accompanied by Stevens and one or two others of the party. It was occupied by a sergeant and six men, whom he called upon to submit and deliver up their arms. "Oh, Sir," said the sergeant, "if we give in to three or four men, we'll be disgraced for ever. Bring a force and we'll submit." He agreed to furnish this solace to their honour, but when he retired for the purpose, the constables fled precipitately to a stronger station.

A check, however slight, is sometimes disastrous. One of the leaders of the Carrick Clubs, at the moment on a mission to O'Brien with promises of support, afterwards assured me that the circumstance of his visiting the police barrack to obtain arms and retiring without getting them, filled him with despair, as indicating a dangerous ignorance of the population with which he had to deal.

At the head of about 500 men they marched into Ballingarry, where they were joined by McManus, who had been in search of them since Monday night, and

* "Those who went to meet him to Mullinahone, remained the whole day in the streets without food or shelter. Some bread was distributed to them at his own expense, and they were told that in future they would have to procure provisions for themselves, as he had no means of doing so, and did not mean to offer violence to any one's person or property. This announcement gave a death-blow to the entire movement. Those poor fellows returned home late in the evening faint with hunger, resolved not to expose themselves a second time to the same privations."—"Personal Recollections of the Rev. P. Fitzgerald."

O'Mahony. From Ballingarry they visited Mullinahone and Nine-mile-house. But by this time several of the local priests advised the people that they were rushing on ruin, and the number of their adherents diminished till it scarcely reached fifty. A cardinal question had now presented itself—Would the priests help the attempt, and if not, could it succeed without them? The contest was sometimes painful. One of the party has described O'Brien sitting down on a bank, while silent tears of shame and despair ran down his cheeks, because the people had let the warning of a young man fresh from college outweigh his years of service and sacrifice.

A few weeks earlier he had passed through the same province followed by exulting crowds, who seemed to spring out of the earth wherever he presented himself. Where were these surging multitudes now? Many were waiting for some successful stroke before declaring themselves. There is a wide interval between sympathy with a public cause, or a secret desire for its success, and the imperious passion which compels men to appear in arms to sustain it. England did not send one cavalier to succour Charles Edward in 1745, though the mass of English squires were Jacobites; and France allowed the heir of Napoleon to be carried to a jail by one resolute soldier, though there was an immense Bonapartist faction in the army and in the country.

It was two o'clock on Wednesday morning when McManus joined O'Brien and Dillon at Ballingarry;

from that time forth we have exact information of their proceedings from his pen:—*

"I found O'Brien, Dillon, O'Donohue, and Stevens, with about a dozen followers. A large force had assembled the day before, but O'Brien sent them home with orders to appear the next morning, provisioned for two days. They never returned.

"On Thursday morning we rang the chapel bells and collected all the men we could. We paraded and drilled them, showed them how to form, charge, &c. Between twelve and one o'clock we marched to Mullinahone at the head of about a hundred and fifty slashing fellows, tolerably armed, and all in high glee. Dillon walked at their head. When we neared the village I was ordered forward to purchase all the bread I could find, and I can speak confidently of the numbers, as I paid for a hundred and sixty men's shares, and had a few left. During their hasty meal the parish priest got among them, and when we were ready to march we found a third of our men disaffected, and in a few minutes they dispersed. This, however, did not damp us, and we pushed on for Slievenamon, where we expected Doheny with a considerable force. To our mortification, however, desertion continued at every opportunity, so that while we were still five miles from the rendezvous our party did not exceed a score. Under these circumstances we gave up the expedition to Slievenamon, dismissed our remaining followers for the night, and about dusk, wearied by want of rest and proper food, we pushed on for Killenaule, where we arrived after midnight, and got accommodation in a small inn.

"Next morning I was seized with a fit of cold shivering from the wet and fatigue I had endured, and I was ordered to remain in bed. But shortly afterwards Dillon and O'Donohue rushed into my bedroom to announce that we were surrounded by a squadron of cavalry. I jumped out of bed, and when I had

* McManus wrote this narrative within a couple of weeks of the occurrences described. It was written while he was in expectation of escaping to America, and sent to me in Newgate prison. (See note, p. 699.)

dressed hastily and got into the street, I learned that we were not actually surrounded, but that the cavalry were advancing on the town. I instantly gave the word 'up with the barricades,' and, calling together about a score of idle loiterers who were in the streets, seized on some carts of turf which were standing about, and in less than ten minutes we had the first barricade (an almost impassable one) erected at the narrowest part of the street. Dillon, Stevens, O'Brien, and O'Donohue took charge of erecting two others. I then seized a horse and galloped off to reconnoitre. I took a short cut across the country, but on jumping on the road about a mile from the town, I found to my consternation that the dragoons had passed; I could see them at least half-a-mile in advance of me, and within view of the barricades. I galloped after them, and collecting about seventy men on the road, we pulled an iron gate off the hinges, and raised about eighteen inches of a stone fence across the highway at the narrowest point, and placed ourselves behind it. I have no doubt that this barricade (in their rear) was seen by the troopers. The scene at the town I must give as described by my comrades on my return, where I arrived half-an-hour afterwards entirely free from the bilious fever with which I was supposed to have been attacked.

"On the advance of the troop (the 8th Royal Irish), the officer in command (Captain Longmore) rode to the barricade and asked that his troop might pass. By this time the insurgents had collected about thirty men, with one rifle, two muskets, and some pikes and pitchforks, followed by a crowd of women and children. Stevens covered the officer with his rifle, and held his piece at dead-rest. Dillon, who was standing on the top of the first barricade (looking, as I was told, the very personification of courage), entered into a parley with him, and demanded if he came to arrest O'Brien. He gave his word of honour as a soldier that he had no warrant for O'Brien's arrest, and if allowed to pass quietly through the town, would neither molest him nor anybody else. After some consideration Dillon allowed them to pass, one by one, through the barricade. The

soldiers being Irish, and evidently not hostile, the people gave them a cheer as the last man passed.

"O'Brien was not present. Before the troops advanced, Dillon and the others insisted on his retiring to some distance, which they got him to do with difficulty. Thus ended the affair at Killenaule. It may be sneered at as a paltry business, but (all the circumstances considered) it was, in fact, an act of reckless bravery.*

It is a significant fact that the news of this trifling success had such an effect on the people that they began to stream into the village. A success was doubtless the one thing essential to secure further successes; but it could scarcely be won without arms or men. McManus proceeds:—

"Before leaving the village (several recruits having come in) we reviewed the men who had arms of any description. They amounted to about fifty. With these we proceeded to the neighbouring collieries (where a large number of miners were employed). We spent all the forenoon and evening in rousing the district. We met support as far as the people could give it, but they were without arms, and seemed to have had much of their physical courage starved out of them. They were all hero-worshippers, however, and O'Brien was their idol. Late in the evening we were joined, to our great satisfaction, by O'Mahony, Doheny, Meagher, Leyne, Reilly, Cantwell, and some others, and we agreed to retire to the village on the commons to take counsel together."

Meagher has described his own arrival at the rebel

* Mr. Mitchel, who is not a generous critic on his friends, thinks that Dillon was much to blame for not having commenced the war then and there. But to attack a troop of dragoons with one rifle and two muskets was scarcely an enterprise which commended itself to a man of Dillon's brains and judgment.

muster, and the picturesque scene which broke upon his view :—

"Approaching still nearer, a shout was given—then another and then a third—the pikes, scythes, and bayonets being thrust upward in the murky air, amid the waving of hats and green branches, and the discharge of pistols. The next moment I recognised Smith O'Brien, John Dillon, and O'Donohue. Smith O'Brien stood with folded arms a little in advance of the crowd, looking as immutable and serene as usual. Dillon, with a large blue military cloak thrown over his shoulders, smiled quietly and picturesquely alongside of him, his mild, dark, handsome features contrasting with the plainer and sterner aspect of O'Brien. With a thick, black fur cap—something like a Grenadier's *razèed*—drawn over his ears and down to his eyebrows, with a little black cape hooked round his neck, and a musket hugged to his cheek, O'Donoghue peered through the front rank of the guerrillas, his sharp black eyes darting in sparks of fire from him, the wild delight excited by the scene and the prospect of a fight. John O'Mahony, too, was there; and so were Michael Doheny, Devin Reilly, John Kavanagh, James Cantwell, and James Stevens. As I jumped off the car to throw myself among them, a tall, dashing, soldierly fellow—his frank, bold, handsome features flashing with delight—sprang forward, with a ringing and uproarious laugh, to grasp me by the hand. It was his left hand he held out to me—his right had hold of a rifle. A green cap, with a broad gold band, was jauntily tossed upon his head, and a black glazed leather belt, supporting a cartridge-box, was buckled round his waist. 'Twas McManus."

The consultation that evening was the gravest in which the men concerned were ever engaged. It has been misrepresented and misunderstood; but the naked, unadorned truth may be gathered from the narrative of McManus :—

"We reached the village about eight o'clock in the evening, and held a counsel for an hour and a quarter. Our past movement was debated and strongly censured. The majority were for another mode of action—waiting for the harvest, and concealing themselves in the meantime. O Brien, however, declined this course positively. He would not go lurking about; but, in preference, would stake his personal safety, and the cause, on the faith and bravery of the poor colliers. After a long debate, I suggested that those who chose to remain and act as we were doing should do so; those who dissented might take their own course."

The project of seizing on all necessary supplies and paying for them by drafts on a future National Government, and the policy of offering farms rent-free for ever to men who would fight for the cause were considered. It was suggested that the estates of all proprietors who refused to join the people should be declared forfeited, and the income vested in a Provisional Government for the public defence; but liable to be reclaimed when peace was restored. How are we to support our friends, it was asked, except at the cost of our enemies? But O'Brien, who was ready to die, but was not ready to abandon any of the opinions he would have supported in a national parliament, would not consent, and this decision starved the insurrection. The other advice he wisely rejected. The proposal to hide came too late. Had it been acted on all the best men throughout the country would have been arrested; arms would have been seized universally, and the leaders would probably have fallen into the hands of the Government in the end; for to hide gentlemen among a population of peasants was

about as feasible as to hide gold-fish in a duck pond. What was finally determined was that Dillon, Meagher, and Doheny should make the experiment of raising other districts, and that O'Brien should remain at the collieries. With Meagher went Leyne and O'Donohue; with Doheny, O'Mahony; Dillon went alone. Reilly returned to Dublin in disguise, and made his escape to America, without having seen a blow struck. McManus and Stevens determined to remain with O'Brien.*

Doheny confidently undertook to reassemble his monster meeting at Sleivenamon, with arms in hand this time; but he never succeeded in getting together more than a body-guard to protect him from arrest.

Dillon, Meagher, and Leyne made for Templederry, on the borders of Tipperary and Limerick, to obtain the aid of a Confederate as deeply pledged as either of them to fight for independence. To their consternation, Father Kenyon received them with coldness and irony. "Fight? Yes, of course he would fight, if the people showed themselves prepared for revolution; but it was not becoming for a priest to begin a bootless struggle." Dillon, we may be assured, reminded him that this was not the way priests interpreted their duty in Wexford fifty years before, or in Spain, in South America, or in

* James Stevens' account of the Council, where he preserved the attitude of an observer rather than an interlocutor, is that: "Reilly was for abandoning the attempt; Doheny thought they ought to lie by till the harvest; and Dillon proposed that they should go to Limerick (where O'Brien had many partizans) and fight or die." O'Brien, who sat at the head of the table, negatived all these proposals. "I won't hide," he said; "I won't be a fugitive where my forefathers reigned; I won't go to Limerick; I will continue to appeal to the people as I have been doing, till we gather enough support to enable us to take the field."

Belgium; and that a priest with these scruples ought not to have conspired with him to commit High Treason by soliciting foreign aid only six weeks before; for in treason there is no limited liability. What, he demanded, did they wish him to do? They wished him to summon his congregation by ringing the chapel bells, and march at its head to the aid of Smith O'Brien. This enterprise he positively refused to undertake. They might, if they thought his people were in the necessary disposition for such an adventure, raise a green flag on a pole anywhere in the district, and see how many men would rally round it; he would offer no objection. On this ironical counsel they took their departure.* Dillon made his way to the west, where he

* Mr. Luby, who was a friend of Father Kenyon's, records the defence he made for himself after the catastrophe, and it is subjoined: "Father Kenyon's conduct during the crisis in the previous year had been most severely criticised by his brother Nationalists; had been even described as a downright defection from the cause. Had he not been elected on a sort of military council or directory at a meeting of delegates of the Dublin clubs? and yet he had remained in Templederry when the days of real danger—the days to test men's souls—had arrived, contributing no efforts whatever to call forth an initiative on the part of the people. He now endeavoured to justify this inaction. His bishop, Dr. Kennedy, of Killaloe, had suspended him some time previously to the crisis in consequence of his extreme revolutionary utterances and action. At length the bishop, it appears, had intimated that he would be satisfied and remove the suspension if Father Kenyon would so far concede as to admit that, as a priest, he ought not 'to take the initiative' in an insurrection. Father Kenyon put it to us that he would not have been justified in refusing to meet the friendly prelate half way. Accordingly, he had made the required concession to superior ecclesiastical authority, having at the same time reserved the right to throw himself, heart and soul, into the national movement once there should be an armed force in the field to recognise and sustain an Irish provisional Government. He emphatically asserts that had events turned out in accordance with his hopes and wishes, he would undoubtedly have acted in the spirit of this reservation. He would even have solemnly led forth his parishioners after the celebration of mass. Before the removal of the suspension, it would appear, he had entertained some thoughts of leaving his parish and starting for America, there to rouse up sympathy for Ireland's cause. Such, substantially, was Father

had many friends, promising if O'Brien won any success to raise Mayo, and form a diversion in his favour. Meagher and Leyne returned to O'Mahony's, to co-operate with him and Doheny. The Carrick and Waterford Confederates sent messengers to them as Mullough, and a rising of these districts was fixed for Sunday: the latter under charge of a friendly priest; but the long delay, in which no effectual stroke had been struck, disheartened the people, and their first enthusiasm had by this time completely vanished.

The main interest of the drama centres on O'Brien, but before following his experiment to the close, it will be convenient to glance at the adventures of some of his lieutenants.

Eugene O'Reilly, the law-student, who had remained in Paris with O'Gorman to study insurrectionary tactics, was a soldierly young fellow, whose frank demeanour inspired confidence and affection. He was full of military projects which commanded less attention than they perhaps deserved, for he since won reputation as a Captain of Lancers under Charles Albert, of Sardinia, and in another service rose to be commander of a divi-

Kenyon's plea in vindication of his patriotism. How far it was a satisfactory one I leave to the reader's own judgment, without offering any comment of my own." Either Fr. Kenyon was not able to read the most transparent of human faces on which the Creator has written candour and integrity in luminous traits, or having done Dillon a great wrong he detested him. Mr. Luby further says: "One thing, however, is certain, Kenyon had no great admiration for Dillon. He even (contrary to the general opinion) thought him *flighty*, or fitful and unreliable. When Eugene O'Reilly and I paid a visit to the chapel-house of Templederry later in '49 (that is, shortly after I was released from Cashel Bridewell), our reverend friend told us several queer anecdotes of Dillon; but I shall not notice these now."—T. C. Luby's "Reminiscences."

sion of the army of the Sultan. Before the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, he had been engaged in inspecting the Meath Clubs, and found them eager for a struggle. The soldiers stationed in Navan and Trim, amounting to about a hundred and fifty, were reported to be well affected to the national cause, "ready to fraternise," in the language of that day; and he thought it practicable, with the aid of a couple of hundred Dublin Clubmen, to seize one or both towns by surprise, and summon the farmers of Meath and Westmeath to arms. The garrison of Dublin, he assumed, would have work enough found for it immediately in the South; but if a formidable force could be despatched to Meath, he would cross the Boyne and take up a position in the more defensible country beyond, among a population already effectually armed and organised in the agrarian societies, known as the "Molly Maguires." If he could muster two hundred volunteers at Blanchardstown on the borders of Dublin and Meath, the remainder of the adventure he considered hopeful, and even easy. He submitted this project of beginning the insurrection within an hour's ride of the Castle and the Pigeon House, to one of his friends destined also to run a notable career. Thomas Clarke Luby, son of a clergyman of the Established Church, and nephew of a noted fellow of Trinity College, was barely entering on manhood. He was educated to be a barrister; his taste lured him into the more attractive field of letters; but his passion, like his friend's, was for arms. On Monday morning, while O'Brien was setting

out from Kilkenny in search of an insurgent army, these two young men established themselves in a central position in Dublin, sent for a few Clubmen with whom they were most intimate—picked men, who might be regarded as the officers of the expedition—and mooted their audacious proposal. It is a notable fact that not one of them shrank from the attempt, or failed to appear at the subsequent muster. It was agreed that two hundred Clubmen should leave the city quietly in separate parties, and muster at eleven o'clock that night in the neighbourhood of Blanchardstown police barracks, which it was proposed to take as a beginning of the enterprise, and march upon Navan. Two secretaries of Navan Clubs who were in Dublin answered for the disposition of their town. The rank-and-file of the expedition were to be summoned by an agent on whose zeal and influence O'Reilly had great reliance. This agent was Patrick Joseph Barry, a law clerk, who had been secretary of the Dublin Remonstrants, was still secretary of the Grattan Club, and knew personally every enrolled Confederate in Dublin. There was a time when he would have been a matchless agent, but that time was passed. Nature had given him a countenance which did not inspire confidence; he was loud and vainglorious in conversation, and in the Council, of which he was a member, loved to cap extreme proposals by something more extravagant. For these reasons, or it may be for others more solid, he had fallen into discredit in the Clubs, and there was a wide-spread suspicion that he had occult relations with the police. O'Reilly, who lived

in a quite different circle, had no knowledge of these suspicions; and on the eve of his expedition was struck with consternation when Mr. O'Hara assured him that his agent was no better than a Castle spy. Some of his associates, however, reassured him; Barry, they said, was a demagogue and a braggard, but by no means a traitor. But to reassure O'Reilly was not enough; the Clubs were not reassured. Many of them probably feared that if they answered the summons they would be led into an ambuscade; a few pleaded, and perhaps felt, that the strength of the Dublin organisation ought to be reserved for an attempt to seize on the city when the garrison was sent South; and many doubtless were afraid of consequences when at last they came face to face with danger. The expedition set out by various routes for the rendezvous, one of the Navan secretaries being despatched to forewarn the Clubs. When O'Reilly and his immediate party arrived on the ground, the expedition only mustered sixteen men, mostly armed with rifles; four others turned up later, all of them being Club-men whom O'Reilly and Luby had communicated with previously; a few who had missed the exact rendezvous were afterwards accounted for, but the expedition had failed. Little more than a tenth part of the small party summoned came up to time.* After considerable delay

* The names of those who assembled, as far as I have been able to ascertain them, were O'Reilly and Luby, the leaders; Murray and Mullen, secretaries of the Navan Club; James Hays, C.E., vice-president of the Clontarf Club; O'Rourke, secretary; and Hill, Fahy, and McKenna (a mere youth, brother of the present Sir Joseph McKenna), members of it; P. J. Barry, secretary of the Grattan Club; Michael Barry, his brother, Evans, afterwards a state prisoner (charged with participation in the

and a vain search for their missing men, discouragement naturally fell upon them, and the result of a consultation was an agreement to return to Dublin and wait for certain news from the South. Had fifty men mustered the attempt would have been persisted in, but with less than twenty—for a party of four Clontarf Clubmen had fallen into the hands of the police and never reached Blanchardstown—nothing, they thought, could be done.*

When a confidential messenger reached O'Gorman at Limerick he was reviewing the Clubs, which he found

Cramplon-Court project to rescue the prisoners in Newgate); and Farrell, an artizan, members of it. The Clontarf party fell into the hands of the police, and were convicted of appearing in arms in a proclaimed district, but escaped with a short imprisonment. Mr. Gerald Supple, afterwards a barrister and a man of letters in Australia, described to me the misadventures of a small party of young men who spent the night looking for the place of meeting, some of them having entered on the project less from a conviction of its feasibility than because they regarded it as part of a general plan from Tipperary which might be disarranged if this detail were not carried out.

* Some readers may not be acquainted with the subsequent career of these adventurous young men. When O'Reilly reached home his father had him arrested under the Act suspending the Habeas Corpus, and when he was released, some months later, he became a soldier of fortune. From the collapse at Blanchardstown he seems to have lost all hope in the Irish cause; fourteen years later, when there seemed a probability of war between England and America, he remonstrated publicly with Smith O'Brien for not renouncing it also. The famine, he said, had justified Civil War in '48, but even under that strong stimulant nothing worthy the name of a rebellion could be produced; the grievances of Ireland were no longer such as drive nations to revolt. He died at Fez after a brief illness in 1874. His comrade took a signally different course. Luby immediately after the Blanchardstown expedition made his way to Tipperary to join O'Brien; and when the insurrection was at an end he attempted unsuccessfully to enter the military service of France. On his return to Ireland he took part in various successive attempts to revive the national spirit, and in 1856 was sentenced to penal servitude for life as one of the supreme Executive of the I.R.B., commonly called the Fenian Society. Since the release of the Fenian leaders he has resided in America, and is understood to retain the opinions which brought him to Blanchardstown, but he holds aloof apparently from the Irish-American politics of the present time.

in a state of high enthusiasm. The local leaders reported that the people were eager for immediate action. While he was engaged in this work the *Gazette* arrived, proclaiming him a rebel, and announcing a large reward for his arrest. As a necessary measure of precaution, it was agreed that he should leave the city; and he determined to prepare the rural population for a rising, committing Limerick to the care of the local leaders. Two gallant young fellows—belonging to a profession which is supposed to train men in sordid discretion, John O'Donnell and Daniel Doyle, both attorneys—became his aides-de-camp, and shared his fortunes to the end. They began in Rathkeale, and there, and afterwards in the towns and large villages in the valley of the Shannon, held meetings and organised the peasantry for a turn out. At night they were sheltered by friends, who answered for their protection from arrest. Day by day they expected news from O'Brien, but no reliable news reached them. O'Gorman despatched confidential messengers in search of him; but some of them were arrested, and others probably had to conceal themselves to escape the same fate, and no news arrived. At length he made for the town of Tipperary, and was at last able to communicate with O'Brien, who was then at Ballingarry. He instructed O'Gorman to return to the county Limerick, continue his preparations there, and await further orders.

The incidents in the little town of Abbeyfeale will enable us to understand the general course O'Gorman pursued. There was one Club—not of Confederates, but

of United Repealers; but it had made no attempt to drill or arm, and the peasantry were supposed to regard with indifference what was being done of this character elsewhere. The resident magistrate reported so satisfactorily of the state of public feeling that the Abbeyfeale police were drafted to more suspected districts. But the tranquillity of a country governed as Ireland was, is like the tranquillity of gunpowder. Late in July, O'Gorman suddenly arrived, and addressed the people in a passionate appeal. O'Donnell and Doyle, who were accustomed to advise and guide the peasantry, went among them for a little, and they were soon as ready for resistance as the best organised community. Mr. Harnett, a man in a good commercial position, the president of the Club; Mr. Hughes, the secretary; and Daniel Harnett, a bold and resolute young fellow, undertook to prepare them for an immediate rising whenever the summons came. These volunteers were better than their word. After the Confederate missionaries had gone to another district, it was ascertained that a detective had arrived with a warrant for O'Gorman's arrest. Daniel Harnett got a party together and made him prisoner; he next summoned the population to the centre of the village and read the official document. The people declared for immediate resistance, and parties were sent out to collect all the firearms in the district. That night the watch-fires of a rebel encampment burned on the hills round Abbeyfeale. Next day the insurgents seized the Limerick and Tralee mail, took the arms and post-bags from the guard, but

injured or insulted none of the passengers. The official despatches were taken possession of, but private letters were honourably guarded, and were given up next day to the local postmaster. Troops and police were immediately despatched to the disturbed districts, but the insurgents still held their ground. It was eagerly debated among them whether they would wait to form a junction with the force which they expected O'Gorman to lead, or attack the town at once. But their consultation was disturbed by evil news from Tipperary, and they dispersed in sullen despair.

Rumours of disaster, some of them true, all of them exaggerated by the frenzy of the hour, spread among the people, and they began by degrees to fall away from O'Gorman. The city of Limerick, from which much had been expected, intimated to him, through an authentic channel, that nothing could be attempted there. When it became known that O'Brien had failed, the alarm swelled to a panic, and O'Gorman and his associates found themselves deserted, and in constant danger of arrest. But no peasant betrayed them, or shut his cabin door if they sought shelter within it.

McGee's expedition to Scotland succeeded to the same extent, and failed from the same causes, as O'Gorman's in Limerick.

After consultation with leading Confederates in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Greenock, 400 volunteers were enrolled. It was resolved to abandon the idea of seizing forcibly on a vessel, but the crew of a steamer

sailing from Greenock was gained over, and it was arranged that the arms should be put on board as merchandise, and the vessel when it put to sea be carried to Ireland. A Scotch mechanic, formerly employed in Dublin, recognised McGee, and his presence in Edinburgh becoming known to the city magistrates, a meeting was called to take the precautions such an announcement warranted. The committee of the expedition insisted that he should leave at once to escape arrest, make for Sligo to prepare the way for the projected landing, leaving them to complete the arrangements in Scotland. He took the train for Carlisle, and had for his fellow-traveller Thresham Gregg, the Grand Chaplain of the Irish Orangemen, who recognised him, as he believed, but did not peach. From Whitehaven he sailed for Belfast, and proceeded to Sligo, which he reached on the 2nd of August. There was no Club in Sligo, but some members of the Confederation resided there, and with these he held a consultation at night in a deserted house on the shores of Lough Gill. They reported that the garrison did not amount to a hundred men, and there was no depôt from which they could be speedily reinforced; that the barrack was only protected by a common eight-foot wall; and that the authorities were lulled to sleep by the general calm of the district. As a seaport, Sligo contained stores of arms, including small artillery, lead, tools, breadstuffs and money, all essential in war; and a press to print proclamations. The only organised force on the popular side was a secret society known as

the "Molly Maguires." With this force he resolved to get into communication, and a local Confederate introduced him to one of its leaders. This man, McGee says, was wary and intelligent. He would only act on positive information. "Bring us this day week," he said, "assurance that the South has risen, or will certainly rise, and we will enrol two thousand men before the week is out." On this agreement a trusty messenger was despatched to Tipperary, by way of Roscommon and Westmeath (through which the "Molly Maguires" had established the agency known among the Canadians as an "underground railway"), and McGee in the interval went to lodge at Benbulben in the character of a Dublin student on a holiday. A messenger from Glasgow reached him there reporting that the volunteers were still ready; and he sent him back with the most hopeful news, which circumstances justified.

While some of my comrades were defending their first barricade at Killenaule, I was perplexed by the difficulty of doing my duty in bringing out a number of the *Nation*, by which they would be effectually seconded. McGee, the editor since my imprisonment, was in Scotland, Leyne in Tipperary, J. H. Drum had to conceal himself from arrest, and the acting sub-editor was a lad not eighteen years of age, a younger brother of McGee, and at that time quite unfit for serious literary work.* And

* James McGee afterwards went to New York and became agent of the revived *Nation*. He grew to be a journalist, a barrister, and finally Lieutenant-Colonel in the 69th Regiment of New York Militia during the war with the Southern States. Mr. Drum became a Wesleyan minister in the North American colonies.

articles, or even private letters from the political prisoners, were no longer permitted to be sent out from the prison. But efficient volunteers took up the task. Before the number issued the police were sent to seize and carry off the type, the manuscripts, and the proofs. When they took possession of the establishment they found a lady in the editor's room, and the journal ready to be issued. The manuscript of the number on which they laid their hands consisted in a large degree of articles in two handwritings, both of them plainly feminine. Two of the articles in the unpublished journal were direct incentives to insurrection, and were afterwards included in the indictment against me. One of them, entitled "Jacta Alea Est," excited extraordinary interest when it became known to be the writing of a woman. It was as lofty and passionate as one of Napoleon's bulletins after a great victory.* The other incendiary performance, "The Tocsin of Ireland," had been smuggled out of Newgate, and as the manuscript fell into their hands, the Government succeeded in proving that it was mine.†

It is time to return to the central interest of the drama, which McManus still enables us to follow in close detail.‡ It was now Saturday, a week after the in-

* The courageous woman found in control of the *Nation* office was Margaret Callan, my sister-in-law; the author of "Jacta Alea Est" was Speranza, the present Lady Wilde. Two women of genius.

† The staff of the office were carried to jail. Among the printers arrested was Thomas Flanagan, who had been a United Irishman, and on the staff of the *Press* when it came to as premature an end in '98. He had set up the verses of Drennan and the speeches of Arthur O'Connor, and he had lived to set up the verses of Davis and the speeches of Smith O'Brien.

‡ McManus sent to Dillon in America a narrative commencing where

surgents had declared their intentions at Enniscorthy, and the day following the departure of Dillon and Meagher.

"Immediately on your leaving we set about surveying the village and throwing out scouts. This done, about eleven o'clock Stevens and I went to bed, O'Brien taking the first watch with thirty men. At two o'clock I took the second watch, and at daylight bought all the bread in the village and gave the men breakfast. On returning to the cabin where we sheltered for the night, I found O'Brien had been up several hours, and had written the note to the Mining Company, which told so much against us at our trial.* By this time I had procured a drum and reviewed our men in a field outside the village, and found we could only muster eighteen pikes (very rude ones) and twenty guns and pistols, with about one charge of powder each. I represented this state of things to O'Brien, and urged on him the necessity of rapidity of movement. I proposed that we should at once send off a messenger to Urlingford, where I had learned there was a large number of men ready to join us, and that the curate, the Rev. Mr. Fitzgerald, would put himself at their head. To this he assented, and I instantly despatched mounted couriers with instructions for this party to form a junction with us at twelve or one o'clock at a chapel about three miles distant from both villages. From that point we proposed to wheel sharp by the left, passing close to New Birmingham, and if in sufficient force, to attack the police stationed there, in number about forty. Stevens was dispatched to examine a commanding position where we would muster all our friends if successful in this move; and from which we could march on Carrick, Clonmel, or Kilkenny. . . . We were just getting the men in motion when a

Dillon's personal experience stopped, at the council of war at Killenaule. Though it is briefer, it is in some respects more circumstantial than the sketch written for me, and I prefer to use it here.

* This was a letter written purely in the interest of the working men, but it spoke of what would happen "in case the Irish revolution should succeed," and furnished evidence of his intentions.

messenger was seen galloping towards us. He shouted breathlessly that a large body of police were advancing on us from Ballingarry."

The news was brought by the president of one of the Dublin Clubs, John Kavanagh, afterwards an officer in the Civil War in America. When he abandoned the hope of anything being done in Dublin, he set off in search of the insurrection. At Kilkenny it was reported that Callan was in the hands of the insurgents, and that O'Brien had 20,000 men under his command. A march on Kilkenny was confidently expected, and fresh troops were arriving every day, and all the approaches to the city were carefully guarded. But he believed there was a panic among the local authorities, and that the moment was favourable for O'Brien's attack if he struck rapidly. To evade the police he made his way on foot to Callan, and from Callan to the little hamlet of Nine-mile-house. Here he saw the police marching leisurely towards Ballingarry. He borrowed a horse, for the people recognised him as a friend, and rode rapidly to Mullinahone, where he expected to find O'Brien. It was now between twelve and one o'clock. The result will be best told in his own words:—

"As I descended the road at a gallop, I came in sight of a crowd of people, of all ages and of both sexes: in a few minutes I was among them. The first man I met was McManus, who conducted me to O'Brien. In as few words as possible I gave him all the information I possessed. I never saw him in better spirits; his eyes fairly sparkled when I told him of all I had seen and heard in Kilkenny. While we were yet speaking, word

came that there was a body of men, both soldiers and police, to the number, it was said, of 500, approaching from Thurles. We all felt it would be a dreadful position to be between two fires; and O'Brien (as I had placed myself at once under his orders) directed me, as I was still in the saddle, to go forward and reconnoitre. According to his instructions; I rode about two miles, when I came to the brow of a hill overlooking the country for several miles beneath me. I could see every road distinctly; but no enemy approached from that quarter. I returned as quickly as possible, and made my report to O'Brien. McManus handed me a splendid double-barrelled gun, as I had no arms with me."

McManus describes the confusion which the prospect of a fight caused among the little insurgent force. It was not fear, but wrath and impatience which disturbed them. It was a quarter of an hour, he says, before the butts of our rifles could get us room enough to consult together. It was agreed that it was now too late to carry out the original design; to retreat before the police would greatly dishearten the people, and it was determined to defend the village of Ballingarry. The narrative then proceeds:—

"We threw up a hasty but effectual barricade of carts, timber, etc. In a hollow on the left we placed our pike and pitchfork men, so as to be able to charge either outside or retreat inside. Stevens with some of the gunsmen occupied the houses commanding the barricade; O'Brien with a few gunsmen kept the front of the barricade; I with about eighty men and women occupied a large hollow on the left, about two hundred and fifty yards in advance of the barricade; we were to lie close on our faces until the police had passed and received the first fire. We were then to rush down on their rear, give them a volley of stones, and close on them. Simultaneously with this the pikemen were to charge, and Stevens was to reload as many muskets

as there was powder for, and stand in reserve. In this order we awaited them for about twenty minutes (our force being twenty-two guns and pistols, and about as many pikes and pitchforks, and seventy or eighty men and women armed with stones). By this time the police appeared within about a mile of us; and whether they got news of our dispositions, or were afraid to advance, they suddenly wheeled sharp to the right and ran for a large stonehouse on a hill to our left, and about an English mile in our front.*

"The moment the people saw the police fly, without waiting orders they broke up, and with a yell dashed for the house. All was now confusion; and O'Brien, instead of keeping back the mob, was carried away in front of it. I followed very sullenly with Kavanagh, and rejoined O'Brien in a field above the house where the police had sheltered. I begged of him not to attempt an attack till I had reconnoitred the building. I went down and crept round it on my hands and knees, under cover of a stone wall. It is a large building, nearly square, two storeys high; three windows in the top storey in front, two in the lower, with a hall-door in the centre; in the gables was also a window on each storey. The back was much the same as the front; along the back ran a range of stables the entire length of the house, and around the gables and front ran a wall about 5½ feet high. In front I found the two lower windows barricaded strongly, with the exception of the two upper panes of the one on the right of the door; out of which were three or four carabines. The three top windows I found were also barricaded up as high as a man's breast with mattresses, and out of each were also pointed ten or twelve barrels. The back windows were not barricaded, and were defended by about twenty men. I represented this state of things to O'Brien, and gave it as my opinion that it could not be taken without a piece of artillery; but O'Brien was certain they would surrender, and declared that we

* Inspector Trant, in command of this body of police, must have seen the crowd through the magnifying-glasses of panic, for he afterwards swore that they amounted to three thousand persons.

must attack. I told him we had but one way to succeed, and that was by "smoking them out." I jumped into the haggard at the back of the stables, followed by Stevens and about twenty guns, and as many pikes. We instantly broke in the back windows of the stables, and Stevens, with about twelve of the guns, took a position which commanded the back windows of the house. Kavanagh and the pike men watched the front, lying under cover of the wall. The police in the rear of the house, seeing their windows commanded by the gun men from the stables, mostly withdrew. Having completed these arrangements in a much shorter time than I have taken to describe them, we considered the point of attack. The back door was the weakest; and into the haggard I again jumped, and ordered the fellows hanging about there to get each a load of hay on his back. [The peasants were unwilling to expose themselves to the guns of the police sheltered behind barricades, and he had to perform this work himself.] I was obliged to creep along under the side wall, and fire my rifle into the hay. It began to smoke, and another man was creeping along to fire his gun into it when O'Brien appeared, and ordered us to desist, saying—'Here is the Widow McCormack, and she has been sent round by the police to say they will make terms.' [O'Brien, McManus, the Widow McCormack, and two or three men then opened the front gate and entered the little garden.] O'Brien stood up on the window sill, and thrusting his arm in shook hands with the police, and said it was not their lives but their arms we wanted. While we were in this position, the fellows who before refused to do anything commenced, from under cover of the walls, to throw stones at the gable end of the house, where no police were stationed, and perhaps about eight or ten of them struck the windows, when all at once a volley from about forty carabines was discharged at us. O'Brien was standing within three yards of the house, and I within seven. Two men fell beside me, one dead the other wounded.* I then fired, and all the men in the

* The wounded man was John Kavanagh. A bullet passed through his thigh a little above the knee, grazing the main artery. He lost a great

front rank followed my example; but owing to the windows being barricaded so high our shots took no effect. Immediately after a second volley was fired, the bullets knocking a splinter off the gate struck me in the leg and upset me. This is what gave rise to the report of your being wounded, as I was mistaken for John Dillon all through. On joining O'Brien I advised calling the men off (as they had expended all their ammunition), and that we should fall back on the village and make a rally (many of the unarmed men having fled), but he declared he would never leave the spot, that an 'O'Brien never turned his back on an enemy.' In fact, he became desperately determined, and stood in the midst of the fire without any purpose."*

His purpose was to die; there being no longer, he believed, any other honourable issue from his unhappy position. The conclusion of the tragical story McManus also supplies. He describes Stevens and himself as entreating, exhorting, even coercing O'Brien to retire out of range of the guns. About fifty yards from the exposed position they met Carroll, a mounted policeman, and compelled him to give his horse to O'Brien, who rode to the position where the people had retreated. He found them surrounding a priest, who remonstrated on the madness of their enterprise, and advised them to retire to their cabins. "O'Brien," says McManus,

deal of blood, and was unfit for further service. Pat O'Donnell, brother of the John O'Donnell of whom we shall hear at the Clonmel trials, took charge of him, and got him conveyed to Kilkenny. He was successfully concealed in the suburbs. Dr. Cane healed his wound, and he escaped to France, and finally to America, where he afterwards served with credit, and was killed in the war with the South.

* One of the police afterwards swore that at this point O'Brien cried out, "Slash away and kill them, every man," which to those who knew him was as credible as if it had been sworn that he spoke in Chinese. As the same constable afterwards identified Patrick O'Donohue as one of the assailants, O'Donohue being notoriously elsewhere, the Crown Counsel laid no stress on his evidence.

" made a speech and tried to rally them; but they would not respond."

" Seeing we had no longer any chance there, I implored O'Brien to fall back on the collieries, and warned him of the probability of additional force arriving to the aid of the police. I turned his horse's head, and we moved towards the village. When some distance down, I took a short cut across the fields; but to my mortification, on looking round, I saw him returning to where the young priest was standing among the people. At the village I found a considerable crowd, and called on them to avenge their comrades' blood. I could get but three volunteers, and they had no arms. A second body of police, numbering about one hundred, under Sub.-Inspector Cox, had now reached the ground, and fired some shots; O'Brien, he heard, had ridden to the village of Ballingarry, and there he followed him. Not finding him, he believed he had made for Slievenamon, where he pursued him." *

* When Widow McCormack's " cabbage garden " became a subject of scornful criticism in the New York press, in December, '48, Dillon, then a refugee, wrote O'Brien's defence :—" If Hannibal," he said, " or Napoleon had been in the position of Smith O'Brien, neither of these commanders, with such materials as he had and such co-operation as he received, would have achieved a more respectable result." He describes the armament: —" About thirty rust-eaten fowling-pieces, with an average of one round of ammunition for each." And the co-operation: " Barely half a dozen Clubmen followed him to the field." " He was met repeatedly in the streets and opposed by priests, acting, I have no doubt, in strict accordance with conscience." " His orders and instructions were received by the people with respect—nay, sometimes with cheers; but they were never obeyed." Of the motives of O'Brien and his comrades, he says: " They chose ruin and exile and death rather than suffer the right which lies at the bottom of all freedom to be violated in their persons." Meagher, when his experience as a soldier in the American war gave authority to his evidence, declared that the danger to which O'Brien exposed himself on the commons of Boulah was as imminent as any he would have had to encounter had he stood under fire upon the bloodiest battlefields from Gettysburg to Chattanooga; and that he did not know in military history anyone who braved death more resolutely, or with more of what he happily described as " unaffected and conscientious courage ":—" In the midst of battle-flags," he adds, " in the thick of a forest of steel, and with the shouts of victory or defiance swelling the strife, few there are who will not be borne impetuously along with the pervading spirit of the scene. But to advance and face the murderous fire where no such encouragements are seen or

This was the upshot of the insurrection: a poor, feeble, unprosperous essay; a mob of disorganised peasants in freize coats suppressed by a handful of disciplined peasants in green jackets. But it was dignified and sublimated by the unflinching courage and devotion of the men engaged in it. It was not more heroic to stake life for the common weal at Thermopylæ or Bannockburn, than on the common of Boulah; and the "Cabbage Garden" will attract the sympathy and reverence of generous minds long after more successful achievements have been forgotten.

The worst reproach it involves is that the men responsible for it believed that what they desired would be accomplished, against manifest probability. But it is a delusion they share with many brave and honourable men. Within twenty years the revolutionists of Spain, under the eyes of Mina himself, made a failure more complete than Ballingarry. Within twenty years the Bourbons, under the Duchesse de Berri and the dauntless nobility of La Vendee, did no better. Within the same period the Italian Republicans were twice defeated—once without exchanging a shot, once again with victims only to the gallows. At a date no more distant, the French Republicans, before whom Louis Philippe fled in '48, were twice put down after long preparation, and confident hope of success, in *émeutes* scarce better than a street row. Twice within the same period Louis

heard, but where everything is downcast and driftless, and the disciplined power of a masterly Government confronts you, whilst a mere handful of men, miserably armed, and still more miserably trained, is all that backs you—this is an exceptional courage of a rare order and occurrence."

Napoleon, who afterwards grasped France with so triumphant a gripe, was defeated in a single hour with scarce a stroke struck.

One of the men who went through the disastrous experiment has left this final judgment on it:—

"The people did not want to fight; they were dissatisfied, but not stirred by that noble rage which impels men to face great odds, and prefer even death to a life of misery and degradation. They had been taught only the efficacy of meetings, processions, and eloquent harangues. They had heard the might of the people threatened so often without any result that they looked with astonishment at men who invited them to face the ordeal of civil war then and there. Moreover, they were very ignorant on the subject of politics. The horizon of their thoughts was bounded by the parish in which they lived, or, at best, by the county, and an Irish Nation was a phrase to which no real meaning was attached." *

O'Brien did all that an honourable man could do to overcome intractable difficulties in the position itself, and difficulties scarcely less intractable in his own disposition and character. No one could have succeeded in his place, but he less than any one. He had good

* Private letter *penes me*. Another of O'Brien's comrades, when I met him in prison, put the case into a nutshell. "The towns bade us try the rural districts; in the rural districts the farmers would not give up their arms, and the labourers had none; the priests opposed us, and the clubs sent about one per cent. of their number to our aid." Another of them afterwards wrote to me: "In revolutionary movements, the first emotion and impulse must come from the people themselves. Leaders can only interpret that sentiment and guide it, they cannot create it. The leaders were as noble men, as true, as unselfish, as purely patriotic as any men I have ever known or read of. I am proud to have taken part in their counsels, and even to have shared their defeat." O'Brien, years afterwards, wrote: "It matters little whether the blame of failure lies justly upon me or upon others; but the fact is recorded in our annals—that the people preferred to die of starvation at home, or to flee as voluntary exiles to other lands, rather than to fight for their lives and liberties."

abilities, and a public spirit so far above his class that he was unintelligible to them. He would have been an eminent parliamentary leader in a national Parliament, certain never to place his own interest in rivalry with the interest of his cause or his country, or to neglect or ignore the just claims of others. But he was too cold and too scrupulous to be a leader in a revolution. To move and control the people, one must share their passions and sympathies, and he could never quite forget, as Mirabeau and Lafayette forgot, that he belonged to the caste of gentlemen. That he should have striven to the end to win his own class to his opinions was natural and laudable; but the end was come and they were not come, and he made war as if they were his allies, while they were his enemies. It cannot be doubted that he made a fatal mistake in refusing the people the ordinary resource of revolution—to raise supplies on the credit of a Provisional Government. To feed an insurgent army on bread solely, was to render the experiment hopeless. Men who are not well fed will not fight. And not only a sufficient supply of provision, but the class of provision to be supplied, was a cardinal question. Experienced soldiers hold that men fed habitually on rice or potatoes cannot, all other considerations apart, encounter men fed on beef and flour. The flocks and herds, which were seen on every hill, ought to have been bought and paid for by orders on the national treasury. His scruples were out of place when he was risking the lives of his countrymen and the fortunes of his country.

He never did a dishonourable action, but he sometimes saw dishonour where there was none. "It is a great public calamity," says Joseph Le Maistre, "when a good man is in a place, and time, that requires a great one."

There was bitter wrath among the Clubs at the opposition priests had offered to the movement. They had ruined the insurrection, it was said. It is certain, had they helped it cordially, it would have been widespread and protracted, though it is doubtful whether it would have been successful. Priests who opposed it, because they were convinced it had no chance of success, only did their duty. Those who opposed it because they believed the Conciliation Hall slanders on the Young Irelanders, may have been poor judges of human nature, but where they believed, and not merely made pretence to believe, they must stand acquitted in the eyes of honourable men. When the struggle was over, many of them came to the assistance of the defeated party. Dillon, McGee, Doheny, and other refugees escaped by the aid of priests who were in no way committed to their opinions. Meagher also might have escaped by their aid if he would. They helped me to make jury-packing difficult, and finally impossible. One of the ablest of them afterwards said, "If the priests withheld their people from a naked encounter with a tiger, it did not follow that they loved the monster who ravaged their fields a whit more."* But the handful of priests who stimulated the insurrection, who were

* Archdeacon Fitzgerald.

committed to resistance more unequivocally than O'Brien or Dillon, behaved shamefully. I have spoken already of Father Kenyon. When we were defeated and helpless, another priest, who had been a trumpet of resistance, re-appeared. While O'Brien, Meagher, and McManus were still untried, the clergy of the Archdiocese of Tuam issued an address in which the prisoners and their associates were denounced "as the enemies of order, religion, and country," and among the signatures which sanctioned this calumny one may still read "James Hughes, P.P., Claremorris."

Before closing the narrative of the insurrection, it is necessary to enquire how the attempt fared to procure money and officers from France and America. On the arrival of the Irish agents in New York, and the exhibition of their credentials, a Directory was immediately formed, of eminent Americans and eminent Irishmen, to co-operate with the Confederates.

The Directory raised £10,000 on the moment, and two agents were separately despatched to Ireland with a portion of the money and a promise that the more important assistance required would be sent later. One of them was a barrister; the other was connected with the diplomatic service of the Republic; both were Irish by descent, but by birth were American citizens. When they reached Dublin the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, every American was subject to strict scrutiny, and several who came on their own motion were already in Newgate. But one of the agents baffled the Government, and was allowed to take up his quarters at a

fashionable hotel as a foreign tourist. By this time O'Brien was in Tipperary, and every Confederate to whom the agent was accredited was either with O'Brien, engaged in some similar expedition, or in prison. With notable skill and prudence he ascertained what remaining man was deepest in their confidence, and made his way successfully to him. But he only reached him when the affair at Ballingarry had given a fatal blow to the insurrection, and it was impossible to hope for success. He offered the money of which he was the bearer, to the gentleman he communicated with, to be applied at his discretion, but he was told that it was now useless for the purpose designed. It might be serviceable in the defence of the Confederates who were, or might become, prisoners of the Crown, and the gentleman threw out this suggestion; but the agent replied that he had no authority to apply it to this purpose, and the interview came to an end. The other agent presented himself a little later to a gentleman related by blood and affection, rather than by political sympathy, with certain of the Confederates. The time was one of preternatural suspicion, and when a dapper, intelligent young fellow found his way into a mercantile office, and announced himself in a whisper as an agent of the Irish Directory in New York, the effect was electric. "I don't know you, Sir," said the man of business; "you may, for aught I can tell, be a detective from the Castle. If you are what you represent yourself to be, the sooner you return to America the better, for Dublin is no safe place for you." Some friendlier intercourse followed, and finally the

advice to return immediately to the United States was acted upon.

The Executive Directory in New York were of opinion that if their funds were no longer needed for the original purpose, a portion of them were properly applicable to the State Trials; the difficulty was how to transmit them safely. Richard O'Gorman Senior was much puzzled by a letter from the famous firm, Stewart and Co., of New York, announcing that they found by an examination of their invoices for some years an overcharge to the amount of the accompanying letter of credit (£500), which they requested to have taken into account and acknowledged. As similar letters and remittances reached one or two other men of the same opinions in Dublin, the intention was soon divined, and the money applied as was intended. When John Dillon arrived in New York he was added to the Directory, and there was no longer any difficulty in transacting the business in a regular way, by dispensing with the aid of the Post Office. The result of this experiment was that the Americans and Irish-American sympathisers came promptly to the aid of the Irish people, and, had the application been made earlier, would have furnished effectual assistance.

In France there were still grey-haired soldiers who had conspired and fought for Ireland half a century earlier, with Tone and Lord Edward. General Arthur O'Connor and Colonel Byrne received the envoy warmly, and set to work promptly to procure the assistance he

required. But I am happily in a condition to allow him to tell his own story :—

"Arthur O'Connor took up the matter warmly, as did our friend Byrne. It was arranged that, if possible, we should procure from the French Government a supply of arms and ammunition, which should be stowed away in a steamer and sent over with me to Ireland. General O'Connor had an interview on this subject with the then Chief of the Executive in France, Cavaignac, who expressed warm sympathy with us, and appointed a day for a second interview, at which I was to be received. This was the day of the arrival of the false announcement of the success of the rising. This bulletin made an immense impression in Paris; so great, indeed, even in the highest quarters there, that I have it on undoubted authority that the Marquis Ricci, who was then awaiting an answer to a demand which he had made on the part of the Piedmontese Government, was kept for two days longer before he could receive it in consequence. The next day, however, brought a contradiction of the bulletin—and with it, the downfall of every hope of effectual, or indeed any succour from the French. . . . . The mission resulted in nothing, mainly, I believe, because I had not been despatched in time; for the juncture of affairs was so critical at that time in Europe that a straw would have inclined the balance either way—to peace or to war. That is my conviction, founded upon what I saw and knew. But it is my conviction also now, and after a pretty long experience and close observation of the character of the French Government and people, that neither at that, or at any future time, would or will they make any movement in favour of another people, unless to advantage themselves." *

* There was a story current among the Irish colony in Paris, for which no adequate authority has ever reached me. It was said that the French Government gave or sold 25,000 guns to certain Irishmen at this time, that these guns were shipped for Ireland, but the story getting out, the vessel carrying them was pursued by a British ship of war, and had to take refuge in a Dutch port, and so never reached Ireland.

We must now follow the adventures of O'Brien's aides-de-camp. At the fall of evening McManus made for Slievenamon, where Meagher and Doheny were reported to be in force. The night was one of constant rain and howling wind, and he toiled through the waste over his ankles in mud. After painful wanderings in search of them for several days, it became plain to him at last that the cause was lost, and he resolved to escape. He made for Cork, where his friends got him on board a ship lying at Cove, and bound immediately for the United States. But before sailing the police detected him, and on the threshold of liberty he found himself in handcuffs.

Meagher, with Leyne and O'Donohue, suffered bitter privations; "sometimes sleeping in old hay-lofts on bundles of straw, at other times in miserable cabins, with the most wretched and sickly of the peasantry, and once or twice by the ditch side," hoping against hope. At length their latest hiding-place was visited by a clergyman, who offered Meagher facilities to escape to America; but he refused. "When the Government comes to wreak its vengeance on our failure (he said), the people shall still see we are at their head." The clergyman proposed that they should surrender on condition of being permitted to leave the country. Meagher consented, provided that all those concerned in the movement would have the same choice offered to them. The answer was contained in a letter from Mr. Redington. The Lord-Lieutenant would guarantee the lives of Mr. Meagher and his associates

if they pleaded guilty of High Treason, and if the arms in all the disturbed districts were delivered up without delay. This offer was rejected, as those who made it must have anticipated. A cruel perversion of Meagher's generous proposal appeared in some of the newspapers: it was reported that he offered to surrender, if his life was spared. To protect his reputation, which was dearer to him than life, he determined upon no longer concealing himself. He and his associates walked towards Cashel, and were arrested on the way by a party of police and taken to Thurles.

For a week after Ballingarry, O'Brien concealed himself successfully from the pursuit of the police; but though the people would not betray him, they were alarmed and distressed, and the situation became intolerable. He determined to go straight home, where the police would be sure to find him; but he was arrested on his way at the Thurles railway station, and handed over to the custody of General McDonald, who was in command of the British troops in the South. In order to procure a change of linen, he sent a note to Doheny's house for a portmanteau he had left there a week before. He insisted to the end of his life that he did so on an honourable understanding with General McDonald, and others in authority, that he should receive it as it was delivered to them by Mrs. Doheny. They sent it to Dublin Castle, however, and it was unhappily found to contain papers which compromised himself and others. Though the discovery bore harder on me than

on anybody, I have never been able to see that a Government were bound to respect the papers of a rebel leader, after an unsuccessful insurrection, when he had fallen into their hands; for the honourable understanding was denied. But one must sympathise with his indignation when he learned that Mr. Redington, a man who had been his personal friend, even his political follower, should have availed himself of a volunteered communication like this, to ferret out evidence against him. Every fragment of paper in the portmanteau down to visiting cards was numbered, initialed, and sent to the Crown Solicitor's office for scrutiny.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IV.

I print the note which accompanied McManus's narrative of the proceedings in Tipperary as a curious evidence of the influence the experiment had made on an intelligent and upright man.

"My dearest Charles,—By the time the enclosed reaches your hands I hope to be on my way to a free country. My business in Liverpool is ruined, but, thank Heaven, I have pluck enough left to open a new career; I regret not the part I have played, and under every circumstance, whether in prosperity or adversity, will be ready to play it over again. For a short time I will devote myself to creating an honourable existence. In the meantime I will never lose sight of the glorious cause to which I have pledged myself. Whenever a death-blow is to be struck at this vile despotism that crushes our land, I trust in heaven I will be there to strike. Do not despond at our present failure. I have got high hope, and am as light of heart—aye, and more so than when I stood on the Hill of Tara in '43. I have seen more in the last short campaign than you could learn in twenty years of a city life. I see elements at work which, to my mind, are indisputable evidences of the consummation of what we have begun. Therefore, be of good cheer. May God bless you, and favour our holy cause, and may our poor trampled people soon have the right to the produce of their own toil, is the truest and purest wish of, my dear Duffy,

"Your ever faithful friend,

"T. B. McM."

CHAPTER V.

THE STATE TRIALS AT CLONMEL AND GREEN STREET.

THE insurrection was at an end; the last spark of resistance had apparently died out; but the Confederates who were first arrested were still in Newgate awaiting their trial. For a fortnight had barely elapsed between the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act and the arrest of O'Brien. Of the four imprisoned journalists, two were convicted and sentenced to transportation, and the other two, who were certainly not less guilty of the offence charged in the indictment, escaped. One was acquitted by a Castle jury, the other, after five separate indictments and two trials extending over a period of nearly ten months, was set at liberty. How it happened that such a different fate befell these men is one of the most curious stories in Irish annals, and it is now told for the first time.

Three days after O'Brien's arrest at Thurles, the Commission at which the three journalists were to be tried opened at Dublin. On the eve of the Commission, a friend, whom I could entirely trust, assured me that the bulk of the class which formed the Old Ireland Repealers had been persuaded by detectives, and confidently asserted, that Smith O'Brien's attempt was a drama arranged with the Government to impede the

infallible plan for obtaining Repeal, which the Liberator had bequeathed to his son, and that not a hair of his head would fall; on the contrary, a magnificent reward was assured to him for his treason. On that day, for the first and last time, I flung myself down in a passion of shame and rage, and declared there was no hope of saving a people so blind and besotted. The rumour that Meagher was making conditions for himself in utter disregard of the fate of his confederates followed and found believers among the same class. It was under these circumstances that we went to trial; we did not expect, and scarcely desired, any other fate than a speedy conviction.

On the 8th August a true bill was found against me for treason-felony, and next day similar bills were found against my fellow-prisoners. We were brought into court together that we might be arraigned. I was put forward first. The indictment was recited, and I was called upon to plead. At that moment the junior counsel for the Crown* rushed breathless into court and made a communication to his leaders, and the Attorney-General requested that Mr. Duffy might stand aside and Mr. Martin be put forward. I was amazed to see Mr. Butt rise and passionately insist that my trial had actually commenced, that I had been called upon to plead, and was ready to plead, and must plead before retiring. The prospect of a State prisoner at the moment was not so encouraging that it was natural to precipitate the issue, and his motive quite escaped me;

* Mr. Perrin, son of Judge Perrin.

but Sir Colman O'Loghlen came to me in the dock and whispered a sentence which made all plain: "Johnny Perrin," he said, "has come to tell them that a letter of yours has been found in Smith O'Brien's portmanteau, which involves you in High Treason, and Clarendon means to send you for trial to Clonmel. We want to insist that you shall be tried for the lesser offence of treason-felony." * But the contention of the Crown prevailed, and I was ordered to retire. This circumstance alone prevented me being tried at that Commission, and was the first-fruit of Lord Clarendon's rancour; for the Lord Lieutenant regarded me with particular displeasure. I was sent back to Newgate to prepare for death. For five weeks my fellow-prisoners, when we met in the ghastly chapel of the gaol on a Sunday morning, fancied that the public gallows which formed its principal window was destined to open for my last exit from that establishment. For public opinion was still dumb, and conviction, it was understood, would mean death. For five weeks, and up to the day of O'Brien's removal to Clonmel, my friends could obtain no definite information whether or not I should accompany him. The perpetual answer of the Attorney-General to my solicitor was that he had not made up his mind. In the end I learned that the reason I was not sent to Clonmel was that no overt act could be proved there. Had one copy of the *Nation* of July 29th reached Tipperary, it would have furnished the necessary evidence of complicity with

* The penalty for treason-felony is transportation for life, or any shorter period fixed by the court. The penalty for high-treason is death.

O'Brien; but the whole edition, as we know, was seized by the police, and that enterprise of his servants baulked the hopes of Lord Clarendon.

The day I was ordered to stand aside, O'Doherty's trial commenced. The jury framed for him was a purely Protestant one; gentlemen all with excellent Anglo-Saxon names, more familiar to Westminster Hall than to the Four Courts. The article most relied on was an offence against common sense rather than against "our Lady the Queen." It was a weak and incoherent echo of the *United Irishman*. The writer disregarded a union of Repealers; he objected to any negotiations with the imbeciles and traitors of Burgh quay, and had no confidence in the proposed Irish League; the people were long and fully prepared for a struggle, and Meagher was invited to put himself at the head of the Clubs and begin. Mr. Butt's defence was that the Government had not proved that this article, or any of the articles cited, came to the knowledge of Mr. O'Doherty, and it was clear that he must know what they contained in order to form the intention charged in the indictment as the essence of the offence. The Crown possessed the MSS. of the articles, and was challenged to show that any one of them was in the handwriting of the prisoner. This view of the business, and the youth and frankness of Mr. O'Doherty, probably impressed the jury. They could not agree to a verdict, were locked up all night without food or easement, and were only discharged at eleven o'clock the next day. The first State prisoner, it was hoped, had escaped.

Martin's trial was the next. The indictment cited articles by Lalor, Reilly, and Brenan, and some letters of his own, and the publication of the numbers of the *Irish Felon* which contained them was duly proved. The defence relied upon was that the writings of contributors did not represent his own opinions or intentions, and that he ought not to be held responsible for them. The defence was substantially true, but it brought into painful light the absurdity of a gentle, conscientious valetudinarian undertaking to conduct "the *Irish Felon*, successor to the *United Irishman*." Mr. Butt insisted that what alone the jury had to determine was the intention of the prisoner at the bar. If they did not believe that he desired to levy war on the Queen, and depose her from her Crown, they must return a verdict of acquittal. "The prisoner," he said, "would not purchase the verdict that would restore him to liberty and home by shrinking from the consequences of one line that he himself had written; but he did, in the name of British justice, protest against being held responsible for the writings of Brenan, Lalor, or Reilly."

Mr. Martin himself framed two queries for the jury, which brought out clearly the cardinal point of the defence.

"The way he has written them down," said Mr. Butt, "is this: 'Whether the jury believe that John Martin intended to depose the Queen, or to make war against her, and whether John Martin expressed both or either of these intentions?'"

His brother was produced to prove a speech which he had recently delivered at Newry, expressing his desire

to protect property, and his disinclination to insurrection or violence.* The jury, after some hesitation, found him guilty on one of his own articles advising the people to retain their arms, but recommended him to mercy on the ground that it was written in prison and under exciting circumstances. On being called on in the usual way, he re-stated his opinions, and they were in effect the original creed of the Young Irelanders—and a complete repudiation of all the novelties for which Mr. Mitchel had wrecked the Confederation, and flung away his own life.

"My object in all my proceedings has been simply to assist in establishing the national independence of Ireland for the benefit of all the people of Ireland—noblemen, landlords, clergymen, judges, professional men—in fact, all citizens, all Irishmen."

The Court sentenced this simple, modest, upright gentleman to the cruel and inordinate punishment of ten years' transportation.

It was supposed that the proceedings against O'Doherty would be abandoned; for a second trial for the same political offence was nearly unprecedented. And Lord Clarendon was willing to let him off, provided he would set the example of debasing himself. If he

* "Not to unsettle property, not to injure any people, any class, not to injure the people of England, or any class of our own people—even those who act as tools of the foreign Government—but for the benefit of all Irishmen. Let no person imagine that I desire, or have ever desired, to excite my countrymen to insurrection, for the purpose of overthrowing the usurping Government, or seizing our rights. I have not done so. . . Let it be understood, then, that for one Repealer, I do not advocate violence or war. And I am just as peaceful in my views now as I was before the recent events, which have excited such a warlike spirit in some of my countrymen."—John Martin's speech at Newry.

would plead guilty, he would not be called up for judgment. The Rev. Dr. Ennis, parish priest in the district where his family resided, was authorised to make this communication. The agent was ill chosen; Dr. Ennis was a pious corporal, who practised and enforced the observances of religion with great strictness, but he was hard and cold, and exercised no control over the sympathy or affections. No one could have persuaded O'Doherty to do this thing; but I doubt if Dr. Ennis could have persuaded him to a task to which he was well disposed. On his refusal, a new trial was ordered. Two days after Martin's sentence, he was again arraigned. On the second jury, as on the first, there was not one Catholic; but for a second time the jury disagreed, four of them being for acquitting him. After this striking event, his counsel asked that he might be allowed to stand out on substantial bail, but the Court positively refused.

The Government having now all the prisoners they could hope to lay hands on, O'Brien and his associates were removed to Clonmel for trial.*

The *Pilot* was by this time flickering out of existence. O'Connell's patronage had been its oil of life, and, wanting it, it could not live. But Mr. Barrett had found other employment as a Castle pamphleteer and mouchard generally. When my trial for treason proved impracticable, he went about explaining the failure by

* Doheny, Stevens, and O'Mahoney escaped to France. The former, from Paris, laid the foundation of the I.R.B. in Ireland. O'Mahoney and Doheny went to the United States and founded the Fenian Society in New York.

an invention which crowns and consummates his honourable career. While I was a close prisoner, even my business agents not being permitted to communicate with me, it was stated in the *Daily News* that I was going to plead guilty, and that this proceeding would have a disastrous effect on O'Brien's trial. At this time I was strictly prohibited from receiving or sending out letters, except with the sanction of the Governor of the prison; but my friends contrived to send me news of this brutal libel, and I succeeded in smuggling out a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, treating it as it merited. A generous man would have sympathised with my desire to serve my friend in his great peril, and to vindicate my own honour. But Lord Clarendon, who reckoned on my compelled silence, was scandalised that I was able to break through it. He wrote a letter to the Board of Superintendence with his own hand, complaining that I had been permitted to justify myself, and insisting on a rigid restriction for the future. The Board showed me this letter, and I found the angry Viceroy had charged me in his rage with having "broken my pledge not to communicate with the Press." I appealed to them against this slander, and they admitted that I had uniformly refused to give any pledge or undertaking whatever. The author of this story proved on investigation to be Mr. Richard Barrett.*

* These are the *ipsissima verba* of Mr. Barrett's pleasant invention: —"Dublin, Sept. 26. A most startling and significant conclusion arrived at by one of the parties accused of High Treason, and not on trial at the Commission, has come to my knowledge to-day. It is of so extraordinary a nature that I should not alone hesitate to state it, but should meet it with positive disbelief, if my authority was not such as to leave no room for

The Commission was opened at Clonmel on the 21st of September. It consisted of Chief Justice Blackburne, a vigorous and unscrupulous partisan; Mr. Justice Moore, an accomplished lawyer, but whose politics had fluctuated with his interests; and Mr. Justice Doherty,

doubt. My information is this: Formal notice has been this forenoon given to the Government that the great literary leader of the Confederate movement—the great concoctor of its plans, the great architect of its organisation, he who was the life and soul of the party, the organiser of the Clubs, the suggester of ambassadorships and of solicitations of foreign aid—in fact, the head and front of the *Nation*, has this day caused it to be announced to the Government, through his solicitor, that he does not intend to put the Government to the labour of a prosecution in this case, but that he is prepared to plead guilty to whatever indictment the Crown may prefer against him, throwing himself on the mercy of the Executive, to dispose of him as may seem fitting in case of one who does not even question its authority, much less offer any opposition to its paramount operation. The time of making this submission is not less extraordinary than is the fact that it has been made. The influence which it must have upon the approaching trials must be very great, and that influence it will be impossible to avoid if, as I believe, the fact itself will be publicly announced to-morrow in the public journals. Mr. Duffy's submission having been but just communicated to me, I have no further time to dwell on it at present."

I came to ascertain the author of the falsehood almost immediately. A barrister, still living, who had formally been correspondent of the London journal, wrote to me in Newgate: "I heard last night for the first time, with surprise and regret, that you attribute to me a recent paragraph in the *Daily News*, which called forth your justly indignant reply in the *Freeman's Journal*. I neither wrote, suggested, nor saw that paragraph until it appeared in print, and when I did, condemned it in common with every manly and honourable mind." And shortly after, the actual correspondent (who is also living, now an editor in the suburbs of London), defended himself by giving up his authority. "I was leaving the *Register* office when Mr. Barrett called me into the office where Mr. Taaffe stands, and in Taaffe's presence, they had already been speaking upon the subject, Mr. Barrett made the statement to me that you had that very morning sent in to the authorities your submission; that you had sent it through the High Sheriff, as the formal channel of conveyance, and that he had the information from the High Sheriff. He said I was at liberty to make the statement in my communication with London, but not to speak of it out-of-doors, as he intended to use it himself in his publication on the next day, Wednesday. . . What my feelings were when I found that I had been imposed upon, what they continue to be and ever will continue, I shall not attempt to describe. . . What you shall be disposed to think of such an explanation, of what was a great wrong done you by one on whom you had years ago conferred a great, the greatest favour, for reputation was at stake in it, I shall not presume even to think."

whose promotion to the bench had been long treated in Irish polemics as the reward of a bitter controversy with O'Connell in the House of Commons. On the opening day the Grand Jury found an indictment against O'Brien and McManus, which, in the strange jargon of criminal pleading, declared that, moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil, they had treacherously assembled, with divers other false traitors, at Ballingarry, in the County of Tipperary, and did there consult and conspire with a view to move insurrection against our Lady the Queen, and to bring and put our said Lady to death. Their various proceedings during the week of insurrection were set out in detail; and a motive was charged which amounted to the crime of High Treason—the intention to "subvert and destroy the government and constitution of the realm as by law established."

O'Brien was first put upon trial.* His counsel demanded a list of witnesses, which in England, in High Treason trials, is given as a matter of right, secured by Act of Parliament. The court decided that in Ireland it was a matter of favour, which the Attorney-General was entitled to refuse; and the Attorney-General refused it peremptorily.

The panel was taken from the Grand Jury list; but this precaution was not enough for the Crown officials: it was taken from it in a manifestly unfair and partial

* Mr. Potter, afterwards M.P. for Limerick, the same who acted for Fr. Davern, was O'Brien's attorney; his counsel was Mr. Whiteside, Q.C., afterwards Chief Justice, and Mr. Francis Fitzgerald—the Baron Fitzgerald who has recently retired from the bench.

manner. Out of two hundred and twenty-eight jurors there were only twenty Catholics, and among the first twenty-six names on the list, which afforded materials for two juries, there was not a single Catholic. The prisoner's counsel challenged the array, but the attempt ended in the usual result. In the recent English case of the Chartist Frost, the jury had been taken from the panel by ballot; and application was made that this method might be adopted at Clonmel. But Mr. Monahan, who had clamoured against the omission of Catholics from the panel in O'Connell's case, while he was still on his promotion, refused to consent; and the jury was appointed, subject to the Crown's power of bidding jurors stand aside.

A prisoner of State must necessarily trust the general character of his defence to his counsel, and he rarely escapes being tortured by evasions and equivocations of fact which he would scorn to employ in his own person. Mr. Whiteside, who was Smith O'Brien's leading counsel, based his defence on the hypothesis that his proceedings in Tipperary were designed merely to evade or resist arrest, which might be an offence against the law, but was certainly not High Treason, the crime of which he stood charged. As respects the barricade set up at Killenaule against the Queen's troops, he was not present at that transaction, the leader being "a person named Dillon." Witnesses were then produced. Sir David Roche and Sir Denham Norreys, who had served in Parliament with O'Brien, and Mr. Monsell,* who had

* The present Lord Emly.

known him intimately for twenty years, proved that his opinions were favourable to constitutional agitation and the monarchy, and opposed to Republicanism and Communism. Public documents were proved and put in supporting the same contention, including the resolutions he had induced the Confederation to adopt before the French revolution, in opposition to the theories of Mr. Mitchel. The counsel for the Crown showed no disposition to be offensive to O'Brien; on the contrary, they were disposed to make some of his associates scapegoats for him. Among the documents found in his portmanteau was a letter from me, written a couple of weeks before his arrest, urging the necessity of more decisive measures. The Solicitor-General suggested that but for the evil advice of "this diabolical tempter," the prisoner would never have engaged in the insurrection. Lord Clarendon, as we shall see, honoured me with his particular enmity. His corps of hired libellers, the boon companions of his tobacco-parliament and barristers on their promotion, thought it a sure road to favour to gratify this sentiment. But O'Brien would not suffer himself to be served by so base a device, and he interposed indignantly to reprimand the Crown official for creating a prejudice against a prisoner still to be tried, and against whom the same evidence was sure to be offered.*

* The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Mr. Hatchell): I wish Mr. O'Brien had not listened to this diabolical tempter who was pressing him to his destruction.

The PRISONER (Mr. O'Brien): It is not fair to speak of Mr. Duffy in this manner in his absence.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I do believe Mr. O'Brien was unwilling to

To Mr. Whiteside's defence the Crown lawyers made answer that if the prisoner's object had been to escape he would have gone to Waterford, which he could reach in a few hours, and thence to England, where the Habeas Corpus was not suspended; or to France, where he could not be reached for political offences.

Some witnesses upon whom the Crown relied to prove important facts flatly refused to give evidence. John O'Donnell and Richard Shea preferred to be committed to prison, rather than utter a word that might be injurious to O'Brien. The farmers did not fight, or fought

take this step. His honour, his position, his feelings, his education were against it, but he was urged on by bad advisers. I regret——

The PRISONER: I must say that it is wrong, at the time that gentleman himself is awaiting his trial, to take this opportunity of prejudicing the public mind against him. I beg most distinctly to repudiate any such observation of the Solicitor-General.—"Trial of William Smith O'Brien for High Treason." Alex. Thom, Government Printer.

Mr. O'Brien's interposition is represented by the newspapers as having been vehement and indignant. Frederick Lucas wrote in the *Tablet* of this transaction:—"The gross and wanton unmanliness of the Solicitor-General is positively shocking. In England we have had nothing so bad—except, perhaps, under Charles II.—since Coke denounced Sir Walter Raleigh as 'a damnable atheist, a spider of hell, the most vile and execrable of traitors.'" Mr. Lucas also recalled the fact that Lord Chancellor Hardwick, in defining contempt of court, declared that to prejudice a prisoner before his case was heard, constituted the offence. "Hatchell," he continued, "was guilty of a signal contempt with the almost avowed purpose of prejudicing the public mind against Mr. Duffy; and for this brutal contempt he ought to have been reprimanded or fined or committed to gaol among the felons. But on that occasion it was left for the prisoner—for Smith O'Brien—to *perform* the office that would have been discharged without a prompter if any fair judge had sat upon the bench."

This was the diabolical letter in question:—

"I am glad to learn that you are about to commence a series of meetings in Munster. There is no halfway house for you—you will be the head of the movement, loyally obeyed, and the revolution will be conducted with order and clemency, or the mere anarchists will prevail with the people and our revolution will be a bloody chaos. You have at present Lafayette's place—so graphically painted by Lamartine—and I believe have fallen into Lafayette's error, that of not using it to all its extent and

feebly, but no man of them was tempted by the rewards offered by the State to disclose the hiding-place of the fugitives, or to appear as a witness against them. In facing penalties they could not measure, and which were terrible from their very uncertainty, they exhibited a courage and fidelity which will win them honour from men who know how ill knights and nobles have sometimes fulfilled similar obligations.

One incident in the trial made a sensation far and wide. It was certain the Whigs who were prosecuting O'Brien had themselves speculated on civil war, in defence of the Reform Bill of 1832, as a possibility. The handsomest and most heroic officer in the British army, it was known, had been instigated by a Whig minister to take command of the artizans of Birming-

in all its resources. I am perfectly well aware that you don't desire to lead or influence others—but I believe, with Lamartine, that this feeling, which is a high personal and civic virtue, is a vice in revolutions. One might as well, I think, not want to influence a man who was going to walk on thawing ice, or to cross a fordless river, as not to desire to keep men right in a political struggle, and to do it with might and main. If I were Smith O'Brien I would shape out in my own mind, or with such counsel as I valued, a definite course for the revolution, and labour incessantly to develop it in that way: For example, your project of obtaining signatures to the roll of the National Guard, and when a sufficient number were procured, and not sooner, calling the Council of 300, was one I entirely relied upon. But it has been permitted to fall into disuse, and could scarcely be revived now. The Clubs, however, might take the place of the National Guard, and the proposal in your letter on Union, of a definite number of Clubs being formed, would just suit as well, if it were vigorously and systematically carried out—each day adding an item to it, and all the men we could influence employed upon it. Forgive me for urging this so anxiously upon you, but I verily believe the hopes of the country depend upon the manner in which the next two months are used. There is not a town in which you could not find a band of missionaries to organise the neighbouring counties—every Club has its active men fit for this work—and it is only by applying all our force to it that we will succeed."

The reader will judge whether this was not natural, reasonable, and honourable advice to tender to my friend; and whether it was not in harmony with the opinions I professed and acted upon myself.

ham when they meditated marching upon London, and it was proposed to produce him at Clonmel to prove this pertinent fact.

The officer in question, Sir William Napier, was an Irishman,* who sympathised keenly with his country. In his youth he had witnessed the excesses of the Orange Yeomanry, and he was a near kinsman of the leader of the United Irishmen. He was, moreover, a man to estimate O'Brien's moral qualities at their true value, for his own valour and genius sprang from a character endowed with the same keen sense of justice, and the same generous sympathy with the poor. He attended, letter in hand, to prove that the prosecutors and the prisoner had meditated the same offence; but the Court ruled the evidence to be inadmissible.†

On the thirteenth day the jury retired, and in a couple of hours found a verdict of guilty, which they accompanied with a recommendation that his life should be spared.

* Sir William Napier has been claimed as a Scotchman, and was doubtless of Scotch extraction, but his love was given to the people among whom he was born. "Curse on the cowardly calumniators who have told you that Irishmen are cowards. They are equal to the English in bravery, superior to them in hardihood of sufferance and devotion to their friends in the hour of trouble, and they are superior to the Scotch in everything. And yet there are good soldiers among the Scotch; I like them not, but I will not belie them."—Letters to Lady Hester Stanhope.

In all the distractions of a soldier's life he never forgot his country; his interest in public affairs breaks out in his most private and domestic correspondence.

† An informer named Stephenson Dobbyn was produced, who turned out to be an Orangeman employed by Colonel Phayre (the person who had negotiated the arming of the Dublin Orangemen with the Castle) to profess himself a Club man, and worm himself into the confidence of men whom he intended to betray. During the preliminary stages of the trial a multitude of persons put themselves in communication with the attorney for the defence to expose the informer, and made suggestions of more or

When sentence of death was about to be pronounced, O'Brien made a short address, marked by touching simplicity and dignity:—

"My lords," he said, "it is not my intention to enter into any vindication of my conduct, however much I might have desired to avail myself of this opportunity of doing so. I am perfectly satisfied with the consciousness that I have performed my duty to my country; that I have done only that which, in my opinion, it was the duty of every Irishman to have done; and I am prepared now to abide the consequences of having done my duty to my native land. Proceed with your sentence."

Once more, as of old, the best men Ireland had reared in that generation were to be sent to death or exile, and authority and distinction were reserved for those who had betrayed her. Though he lived for nearly twenty years after, O'Brien's political career closed in the court-house at Clonmel. But his devotion to the old race and the old cause never slackened. It welled up as freshly when he was fenced round by iron bars, as when he stood among a ring of applauding partisans. To the common sense of the common herd his adventures in Tipperary will seem insane, but it was a divine madness: the same wrath and despair which so often before and since has touched noble souls to see a spiritual, unselfish, emotional race held down and

less value. Turning over these papers, I came suddenly on an adder's nest. One of the friendly proffers of help and information came from Mr. J. D. Balfe, one of three Confederates who were in the pay of the Government. Balfe was employed to slander the Young Irelanders in the Castle organ—the *Evening Post*—and was finally rewarded by being made an officer in the convict department in Van Dieman's Land, to watch over O'Brien and Meagher, with whom he had sat on the Council of the Irish Confederation. It is proper to state that the Orange society expelled Dobbyn for his deliberate treachery.

tortured, by a stronger and subtler, but more sordid master. His statue stands in the capital of the country he loved, and in the long rôle of chiefs and martyrs who have striven and died to save her, there is not one more upright, more steadfast, more unselfish than Smith O'Brien. And, especially, there is not one whose character it more behoves his countrymen to make a study and a model; for his word was sacred, his friendships steadfast, and his life unstained by guile or selfishness.

The trials of McManus and O'Donohue, which followed, exhibit no peculiar features. McManus's achievements in Tipperary were proved by the Crown, and the only answer it was possible to make was to exhibit his personal and commercial character in the favourable light they deserved; and this was done.

Meagher's trial came last. The case against him was the weakest of all, for he had not done any of the things charged in the indictment. Neither erected barricades, impeded the Queen's army, or attacked police-barracks, and it was believed the trial had been postponed that the impression of previous convictions might operate against him.

The Attorney-General reminded the jury that in treason there was no such thing as an accessory—all the persons engaged were principals. A man who assisted others to levy war was himself as guilty as they, though he never left his fireside. This is doubtless the law, and it cannot be disputed that Meagher had committed treason; but the evidence submitted to the jury was

scarcely sufficient to establish the fact in minds not predisposed to arrive at that conclusion. Certain speeches were relied upon, but most of them had been made six months before Ballingarry, and some were the identical speeches for which he had already been tried for sedition; and words alone do not constitute treason. Mr. Whiteside pressed these views on the jury. He separated Meagher's case from O'Brien's. Let those who had levied war pay the penalty, but let it not be extended to those who had not levied war. As two counsel are heard in treason cases, Mr. Butt followed, and insisted that if they pronounced Meagher guilty their verdict would mean that on their oaths they found that he had appeared in arms at Mullinahone, erected barricades at Killenhaule, and performed the other acts charged in the indictment. But it was certain he had done none of these things. He left Mr. O'Brien at Mullinahone, and this was a clear proof that he differed from his schemes.

We may be well assured that this contention had not Meagher's assent, and did not represent his wishes; but it is only in an extreme case that a prisoner is justified in repudiating the line of defence his counsel has thought it his duty to adopt. Witnesses were produced to prove that Meagher was not at Killenhaule or Ballingarry, and that he voted against Mitchel's resolutions at the Confederate meeting before the French revolution.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, with a recommendation to mercy on account of his youth, and for

other reasons not specified, probably the weakness of the case against him.

When the prisoners were asked if they had anything to say why sentence of death and execution should not be passed on them, McManus replied briefly that he had placed his life, and, what was still dearer to him, his honour, in the hands of his gifted advocates, and he only desired to say what they could not say for him—that he faced the sentence which awaited him with a light heart and a free conscience. He would only add that he had passed the happiest and the most prosperous years of his life in England, and he was not actuated in anything he had done by enmity to England, but by love of his own country. O'Donohue confined himself to arguing a law point which had been decided against him, and to thanking his counsel and solicitor for their services.

Then Meagher rose. He would justify his conduct, he said, if he feared his country would misjudge it, but he had no such fear. He knew that his fate would elicit sympathy, and his memory be honoured. He had no enmity against the jury, for the charge of the Chief Justice left them no option but to convict him.

"I am here," he said in conclusion, "to regret nothing I have ever done—to retract nothing I have ever said. I am here to crave, with no lying lip, the life I consecrate to the liberty of my country. Far from it; even here—here, where the thief, the libertine, the murderer, have left their footprints in the dust; here, on this spot, where the shadows of death surround me, and from which I see my early grave in an unanointed soil opened to receive me—even here, the hope which beckoned me to the

perilous sea upon which I have been wrecked, still consoles, animates, enraptures me. No, I do not despair of my poor old country, her peace, her liberty, her glory. For that country I can do no more than bid her hope. To lift this island up—to make her a benefactor to humanity instead of being the meanest beggar in the world—to restore to her her native powers and her ancient constitution, this has been my ambition, and this ambition has been my crime. Judged by the law of England I know this crime entails the penalty of death; but the history of Ireland explains this crime, and justifies it. With these sentiments, my Lord, I await the sentence of the Court. I hope to be able with a pure heart and perfect composure to appear before a higher tribunal—a tribunal where a Judge of infinite goodness, as well as of justice, will preside, and where, my Lords, many—many of the judgments of this court will be reversed."

The sentence on the prisoners was in the form reserved for that grave class of criminals who call in question the justice of their rulers. They were ordered to be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, to be there hanged by the neck, and afterwards the head to be struck from the body, and the body itself to be divided into four quarters, to be disposed of as Her Majesty might think fit.*

* During the trials the police discovered a plot of certain young men to rescue the State prisoners. Among the persons arrested on suspicion of being parties to it, was a young man whose case, I think, illustrates in a significant way the unbroken succession of Irish treason. He was born in Tipperary, where he inherited a moderate competence, but he took slight interest in the political sentiments which prevail in that locality, till he had reached his sixteenth year. Confined to bed by an accident at that period, he chanced to read the poems of Thomas Davis, then in his grave, and they lighted a fire which has never been extinguished. In Trinity College, Dublin, where he completed his education, he became familiar in 1847 with the public action of the Young Irelanders; and before he had attained to legal manhood was involved in this attempt to carry off O'Brien and his companions. This was John O'Leary. Sixteen years later he was a conspicuous public man as editor of the *Irish People*, the organ of the I.R.B., better known as Fenians, and was convicted and sentenced to

The Newgate prisoners who had meditated escaping to join O'Brien bethought themselves, now that his experiment had totally failed, that the rope-ladder might still be useful. Why should they not use it to escape to America? O'Doherty was barely twenty, Williams six-and-twenty, and I was little over thirty. We felt the pulse of action beating too strong within us to subside willingly into perpetual bondage. Half of the Irish race lay beyond the Atlantic; there, if not at home, we might serve our people and help to give them coherence and force. An escape from enemies to whom we had given no parole was a feat to be proud of. From the flight of Red Hugh from Birmingham Tower to the evasion of Hamilton Rowan, Ireland never heard of a State prisoner breaking bonds without a thrill of joy. O'Doherty entered into the project heartily, but Williams excused himself on grounds which we admitted were adequate. Arrangements were speedily made with Confederates outside; a small vessel was hired; and a night chosen for the attempt. We hoped to escape at midnight from a deserted court of the prison. It was from armed gaolers, through armed sentinels, and over high walls which the eye grows dizzy to look upon, that the attempt was to be made. About the noon of the day fixed upon, O'Doherty came into my room to

a long transportation as one of the Executive in control of that organisation; the others being Charles Kickham, of whom the reader has heard on the Streets of Mullinahone; Thomas Clarke Luby, one of the leaders of the Blanchardstown adventure; and their chief, James Stevens, who was O'Brien's aide-de-camp at Ballingarry. Mr. O'Leary has resided in Paris in latter years, and sometimes writes letters to the Irish newspapers on public affairs, distinguished by a good sense, a sobriety of tone, and a fairness to opponents, which are not too common in political criticism.

announce the desperate news that a policeman had on that morning for the first time been placed on a platform overlooking the deserted court. It was a dreadful contretemps, and seemed to bar our way effectually. I went out, as one is apt to do in such a case, to look at this unexpected enemy. I took my ordinary exercise, walking up and down a gallery communicating with the platform on which he was placed. At length he addressed me; he told me his name was Peter Hutchinson, that he was brother to a Confederate with whose career I was familiar, and reminded me that he himself had written some trifles in the *Nation*, and had consulted me repeatedly on his education and prospects. In answer to a remark on our strange juxtaposition, he used the expressive phrase "that I would not long be a prisoner if it depended on him." Here seemed a man made for our purpose. In fact I might conclude that there was a passionate sympathiser under the green uniform of a constable. I retired and sent O'Doherty, who would attract less notice, to complete the understanding. Hutchinson agreed to fly with us next night, and we undertook that the change should not damage his position, but better it. More money was provided, our allies outside were warned of the change of time, and all other necessary arrangements completed.* Next morn-

* More than thirty years later one of the men engaged in the attempt (whom I had never personally seen) applied to me to do him a certain favour, which was no more than his right if he were what he represented himself to be. "How can I identify you," I said, "after so many years in which I have never heard your name?" "I don't know how," he replied, "but sure enough I was there, and the part I had to play was in no way palatable to me. It was I that whistled God save the Queen (the

ing as I was burning some papers, O'Doherty rushed into my room and told me that the Governor and Deputy-Governor with an official from the Castle were in earnest conversation with Hutchinson in the Hatch, and that he was certain the policeman had betrayed us. The rope-ladder was in a cloak-bag in my room, and he proposed to carry it out and drop it into the jakes. But it was necessary to make sure that the coast was clear, and he went out for this purpose. He delayed longer than I expected, and when I opened my door to go in search of him, I found a sentinel at the threshold, who had been ordered to keep me a close prisoner. The three officials, accompanied by a guard, visited my room soon after, and the gentle old Governor offered courteous apologies for their intrusion, which he said was made under orders from the Castle; while Mr. Bourne, the Deputy-Governor, ransacked my wardrobe, searched under the bed, poked the chimney with his walking-stick, without finding anything suspicious. After a search of ten minutes the Governor was about ordering his party to withdraw, when Bourne asked whether there was anything in a little cloak-bag, which lay on a table. "Yes," I said, unlocking it, "there is something in it. You have not told me what you are in search of, but perhaps this is what you want?" There lay the rope-ladder. It was forty feet long, and accompanied by a coil of rope of the same length. Mr. Bourne grinned with malicious joy, while the kindly old Governor

signal agreed upon), and be the same a token it was near choking me." I needed no further evidence that my correspondent was the man he represented himself to be.

muttered: "I am very sorry, I am very sorry." As soon as the Castle was informed of the discovery, O'Doherty and I, with Williams, who had no share in the business beyond being in our confidence, were removed from our ordinary quarters and locked up together in a cell, the same, according to the traditions of the prison, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald died half a century before.*

But it did not fare well with Mr. Hutchinson. When the facts of the case were published in the *Freeman's Journal*, a number of his schoolfellows and comrades in Enniscorthy declared that this loyal official had quite recently been drilling them in military exercises, and stimulating them to prepare for insurrection. The Government were driven by public opinion to order an investigation. It was clearly proved that after Hutchinson had become a constable, he was still member of a Confederate Club, taking an active part in its management, and remarkable for the violence of his sentiments. He had repeatedly drilled the members, assured some of them that the police in Dublin were prepared to join the people, and gave them advice on the best mode of seizing the police-barrack and barricading the town. After these disclosures, it was

* There was no place of recreation connected with this side of the prison except a yard occupied by petty misdemeanants, pickpockets, and the like, and into this yard I was admitted for exercise daily after dinner. My fellow-prisoners exhibited a fine trait of natural politeness or national feeling—for I do not know in which sentiment it originated—by which I was touched at the time, and have never forgotten. Whenever I arrived they huddled into one corner and left me the greater part of the yard for undisturbed exercise during my brief stay. A touch of nature makes the whole world kin, and it seems to me a club or a drawing-room could scarcely have surpassed this courtesy.

necessary to dismiss him; but Colonel Browne, it is to be hoped, was not ungrateful to so serviceable a partisan.

It remains to be told why Williams refused to fly along with us. He was ready to do so a little earlier, when we hoped to join O'Brien; but he positively refused, when there was good hope of liberty and a free career. It is a story singularly illustrative of the method in which justice was administered in Ireland in those days, and, as it has not been disclosed before, may be worth digestion by statesmen who have to do with the government of that country. Williams's father was Count Dalton, whose name he bore along with his mother's—Richard Dalton Williams. His father visited him in prison, and found him so persuaded that transportation awaited him, that he had already divided his books and personal possessions among his closest friends. Count Dalton, who was a man of the world, bade him remember how many unexpected chances there are in life, and so forth; but seeing he made no impression, he at last whispered: "The chances are ten to one you won't be convicted—nay, a hundred to one. Kemmis is a friend of mine, and he tells me you were seldom at the office of the *Tribune*, and that the only evidence against you is the MS. of one of the articles in your handwriting. But this shan't harm you; he will pin the paper between two others, so that no witness will be able to see it. Kemmis is determined you shall escape, and you may be assured it will happen as he wishes." Williams thought so too, and believed

that Mr. Kemmis's sympathy was a better reliance than a rope-ladder.

The next commission in Dublin opened on the 23rd October. It is difficult to conceive a more gloomy prospect than lay before the journalists still to be tried. The leaders of the movement were awaiting execution. The second law-officer of the Crown, speaking in a place where the slightest word would be echoed throughout the Empire, had accused me of having tempted the chief prisoner to his destruction, and it was but ten days' since the rope-ladder had been discovered. I had not summoned a witness or prepared a particle of evidence for my defence, and nothing seemed surer than my prompt conviction. But once again I escaped through the inhuman eagerness of Lord Clarendon to convict me.* In the ordinary course of law a verdict was safe enough, but he charged his blunderbuss to the muzzle and it

* It will be natural for the reader to suspect that I may have deceived myself in believing that Lord Clarendon honoured me with his particular enmity. But this was undoubtedly the opinion of the public and the press at that time. A single paragraph from the "Letters of an Irish Priest" states with plainness and vigour, what was said at the time in a hundred fashions:—"I believe that the Government would look with comparative indifference on the acquittal of all the other prisoners convicted since Mitchel's transportation, or grant them a full pardon, if this were necessary, to prevent Mr. Duffy's escape. I believe, that in an exchange of prisoners, they would gladly have given up all for him. I have learned from unquestionable testimony, from the testimony of a close intimate of the Castle, a tried and trusty Castle-hack, that such were the sentiments entertained in last August. The marked ferocity, the downright brutality, with which the Solicitor-General went out of his way to assail Mr. Duffy during Smith O'Brien's trial in Clonmel, is no light evidence of this. If, however, he be convicted after a fair trial, I will resign him without a murmur, though not without a sigh. If he be convicted by a packed jury, then will the chalice of Whig iniquity be filled to foaming over, and the chalice of every just man's just indignation; then will there rage from shore to shore a rebellion—not of that kind which armed men can extinguish, but a rebellion of every true Catholic heart in the land."

burst. Up to the night before the opening of the Commission, my solicitor could not ascertain where, or for what offence, I was to be tried. On the morning it opened, Sir Colman O'Loghlen visited me in prison, and asked me if I desired to postpone my trial. "Certainly I do," I replied; "whatever chance I have depends upon delay." "Well," he rejoined, "it is impossible for the Government to try you to-day. To get a surer jury they have transferred you from the city to the county of Dublin, and they have omitted to give you the notice necessary in changing the venue." All the other prisoners tried in Dublin had been tried in the city, but Lord Clarendon had determined that my "equals and neighbours indifferently chosen" were to be found in the Orange squirearchy, the débris of the old Corporation, and retired officials, in pleasant country quarters from Finglas to Glasthule. When we came into court, Mr. Butt inquired of the judges in whose custody Mr. Duffy was at present. "In the custody of the Sheriff, I presume," replied Mr. Justice Torrens, smiling. "Of which sheriff, my lord?" After inspecting the calendar before him, the judge announced that I was in the custody of the Sheriff of the county of Dublin. The objection was then taken, and the clause of the Act of Parliament being handed up to the Bench, the judges declared that I was entitled to ten days' notice. The Attorney-General, who was black with rage, thought of a device that might set all right. "I will humbly move, your Lordships," he said, "to have the Commission adjourned for a fortnight, and I will give the prisoner the notice

required." "I am afraid," said the judge, "that will not avoid the embarrassment, for the notice must be given ten days before the opening of the Commission." Thus a second time my trial was postponed, solely by the sharp and unaccustomed practice which was understood to be dictated by Lord Clarendon.

Before the next Commission met, in December, I obtained the county panel of 2,600 names, had it carefully analysed, and began to have some approximate idea of its elements. But it was labour lost. On the 1st of December notice was served upon me that I was to be brought back to the place from whence I came, and tried in the city.

The intense bitterness of the Government naturally begot a counter-feeling, and two circumstances happened, springing out of this sentiment, which it is necessary to record. The remnant of the Dublin Clubs sent a deputation to my family offering to rescue me before the Commission opened. But I countermanded the project peremptorily. I would not purchase my individual safety by one human life.*

The second incident was more touching. Ten of my fellow-prisoners, leaders of Clubs, members of Council, or American agents, came to my cell on a certain night in December, assured me that the turnkeys were drinking with the sentinels, and offered to seize on the guard and open the door. It was a project to be executed then and there; but as it meant certain ruin, either in the

* The deputation consisted of Lewis Moore, of Merrion Row, and Nicholas Rochford, who afterwards served in the American army.

struggle or afterwards, to half the persons engaged, and the advantage was to be mine alone, it was not a project compatible with conscience or honour.

By this time my health had been seriously shaken, and Dr. Graves, who stood in the front rank of his profession, advised that it was essential I should be removed to a healthier prison. He communicated his opinion to the Executive, and his advice could have been acted upon with as little inconvenience to any one as when a traveller changes his carriage in a railway train. Newgate is but a name to the ordinary reader; a few have seen its solid walls and grated door, and thought, perhaps, that within was a clean, wholesome, and silent solitude. But it is incredible what filth, foul air, darkness, and horror were shut up within these walls. There are cells from which light was as effectually excluded as from the grave. In one division dungeons were packed as close as the cells in a beehive. It was built on the burying-ground of an ancient monastery, and reeked with odours of unknown origin. State prisoners got the best accommodation the place afforded, yet my friends reported that the wall of their bedchamber was honeycombed with the nests of spiders and cockroaches, which fell upon them in bed, and into the basins in which they were washing, and the glasses from which they were drinking. My room, belonging to one of the officers, had its outlet into a damp, narrow, funereal court, into which the sun rarely shone, and where a nameless nuisance poisoned the air of heaven. In a prefatory note to "Guy Mannering" it

appears that one of the devices employed by his wicked kinsman to kill James Annesley (the Bertram of the novel) was an attempt to remove him from a healthy prison to Newgate in Dublin. A hundred years of foul air and rotting plaster alive with vermin had not improved the atmosphere; but in this den the gracious Earl of Clarendon directed that I should be retained.*

The third Commission opened on the 15th of December, when I had already been five months in prison. A new bill of indictment, the third, was sent up to the grand jury with a new count, charging me with inciting Smith O'Brien to make war on the Queen. In the forty volumes of State trials there is not a case, till mine, in which three indictments were framed against the same man for the same offence. The indictment on this occasion was one of the longest ever seen in Ireland; it ran to over a hundred feet of closely printed parchment, and contained more matter than an ordinary octavo volume. The judges were Mr. Justice Perrin and Mr. Baron Richards. Mr. Perrin was a sour, dyspeptic official, whose afternoon joviality sometimes left a sullen rage in the morning. Among the prosecuting counsel were his son and his son's father-in-law—a circumstance which ought to have increased the reserve which a judge is bound to exercise—but this judge opened the business by an order forbidding the publication of the evidence in the newspapers till the trial was over. Nothing can be more unfair or unreasonable than a practice which

* It has since been pulled down by order of the Corporation of Dublin.

deprives the prisoner of the assistance of the public in scrutinising the character and testimony of witnesses. Next morning the *Freeman's Journal* appeared with a column entirely blank, except a couple of lines at the head: "The Queen *a.* Charles Gavan Duffy—Judge Perrin has prohibited the publication of the evidence." The public indignation was intense. The Press of all parties shared it; but when the question was renewed in Court, the judge insisted that the prisoner suffered no injury. He would have persisted to the end, but that he was frightened by a leonine roar from the *Times*. The leading journal reproved him in language which, translated into ordinary speech, meant: "You prodigious legal blockhead, you have given the sympathy of three kingdoms to a prisoner who hadn't a chance if you had let things take their ordinary course."

In the new indictment my zealous counsel detected serious flaws. They demurred; and after a fortnight spent in debates and adjournments, the Court was compelled to admit that four of the six counts were bad in law. The moment the decision was pronounced, my counsel declared that I was ready for trial. They were eager to have me tried on the broken indictment, which would shut out damaging evidence. But the Attorney-General insisted that no trial was necessary. In misdemeanour, if a prisoner demurs he admits the offence, but contends that it has not been charged according to law. If he succeeds in his legal argument, the indictment fails; if he does not succeed, he is sentenced as if he had been convicted by a jury. But in trials for High

Treason a man may demur and afterwards plead, as the case involves results too serious to be risked on the whim of a judge. Treason-felony, my counsel insisted, followed the same rule, for the same reason. The Attorney-General insisted that it did not, and that I must forthwith be sentenced to transportation without trial, and on an indictment three-fourths of which had been declared bad in law. The spectators asked, in amazement, Was a man to be transported because in the opinion of the Court his counsel had made a mistake in pleading? Baron Richards discovered a case in which a demurrer in felony was over-ruled, and the prisoner allowed to plead; and this course was taken. But after the plea, the judges desired to adjourn the Commission, as they had engagements elsewhere. My counsel objected in vain. I personally demanded to be tried forthwith, as I had already been detained six months in prison; but Mr. Perrin growled a savage negative, and the Court adjourned for the Christmas holidays.*

The jury-packing practised in all the State trials deeply outraged the Catholic clergy. "I have no reverence," one of the ablest of them wrote, "for a packed jury; and as I serve the God of Justice and Truth, and believe His Gospel, I hate, and loathe, and denounce it. I will submit to the Union, I will submit to famine, I will submit to universal beggary, but to Protestant ascendancy I will never submit. I will never bear in patience that a handful of Protestants

* When this learned judge assented to a proposal, the junior bar were accustomed to say that "Perrin grunted the motion."

shall alone be thought fit to sit in judgment upon me, and that I shall have to regard their verdict as a sentence of just law."

This sentiment spread far and wide. Dr. Spratt, a Dublin friar, who next to Father Mathew was the leader of teetotalism, put himself at the head of a committee to elicit and organise it. On the eve of the fourth Commission, a memorial was signed by upwards of four hundred Catholic priests and forty prelates, deans, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, and the chief corporations in Ireland, a host of Catholic and Protestant gentlemen, and by upwards of seventy thousand of the people, against the practice of packing exclusive and partisan juries. Lord Cloncurry, in signing it, declared that to petition against such a practice was like having to memorialise a Government not to commit highway robbery.

In the silence of Newgate I turned my whole attention to this subject. To arrest jury-packing, the first condition was a rigorous and specific exposure. But the journals which fought the Government without fear of consequences were suppressed; those which remained were placed at the mercy of the Executive by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and a decisive exposure was not to be expected. After much reflection I adopted a plan which answered its purpose effectually. I served a notice on the Sheriff, reminding him that I was entitled to a fair trial, but that if the system pursued in the other State trials were maintained, a fair trial was impossible. I described the methods by which

justice had been denied to the other prisoners by packing exclusive panels, recited the oath by which he had undertaken not to "do wrong to any man for any favour or from hatred," and I called upon him to array a panel in just accordance with the juror's book, and warned him that I was prepared to prove these facts, and would use the notice to fix him with the knowledge of them. To the Attorney-General, who was the real author of the wrong, I addressed another notice in his character of Public Prosecutor, and spared no pains to paint the injustice of which he had been the agent. There were not more than a few dozen Englishmen in Dublin competent to serve on juries, yet in each of the State trials there had been one Englishman on the jury; there were close upon three thousand Catholics competent to serve, and there was not one Catholic permitted to enter the jury-box. As these passed for legal notices, the newspapers copied them extensively.*

* Instead of a *précis* of these documents, I will present the reader with some evidence of the effects they produced on my fellow-prisoners. Fintan Lalor wrote me:—"I have read your notices to the Sheriff and A. G. They ought and must, I think, produce a greater impression than all previously written on the subject. Would it not be well to ensure that Lord John Russell should get a copy?" Martin, who was then a convict in Richmond Penitentiary awaiting transportation, wrote me:—"I was and am proud of your Notices. I feel that the plan of defence adopted or permitted by the rest of us was not only wanting in provision for resisting the main body of the enemy's force—his jury packers—but also wanting in moral dignity, and suggestive of moral injury to our cause. So long as the enemy is free to pack, all pretence of resistance is of course quite useless. And to leave our cases in the hands of mere technical lawyers, who will exert themselves only or mainly to persuade the jurors that the facts in the indictments against us are not legally proven, or even that such facts, if legally proven, do not lie incontestably within the technical comprehension of the Act of Parliament (and may the curse of God light and rest upon their Acts of Parliament against Ireland! Amen and Amen!) who adopt merely a legal defence, remonstrating with political enemies that there is some neglect of form in the process against us, some technical

But it was essential to bring home the wrong to men who, it might be hoped, could prevent a repetition of it.

Two volumes of Macaulay's "History of England" had just appeared, and I read them in prison. He painted in sombre tints the criminal courts under the Stuarts, where juries were shamefully packed with partisans of the king, and the prisoner brow-beaten by an insolent judge. I wrote him an ironical note dated

defect, which forbids them to convict us in due course of law, and encouraging our political friends with suggestions of the same formal and technical defects, the same happy accidental slips of our persecutors, which permit them to acquit us, also in due course of law—to omit and avoid the moral, constitutional, and political vindication of our acts—of the very acts charged in the indictment—to offer such defence and omit such vindication, while it cannot avail us before a packed jury and a hostile court, does surely tend to place us in the attitude of denying the faith that is in us, or at least of submitting to a charge of distrust in the claims of that faith upon the hearts and minds of our fellow-citizens. Now you may recollect to my shame that I have all along been maundering in this sort of strain —talking mighty big about real constitution and real law—and yet *I* was too lazy and too cowardly to act in accordance with my own principles when I was to be put upon the country. But you, whom I used to scold for not fully agreeing in my doctrines about 'law' and 'constitution,' are taking the manlier, more citizen-like, and, may Heaven grant! the more effectual, course of proceeding. . . . And though, you know, Duffy, that I am so unfortunate as to differ from you upon many points of policy, and upon at least one serious matter of personal feeling, I am proud to acknowledge in you, after glorious Davis, the father of the Irish national party and the chief writer of the party. But for the *Nation*, which your generous boldness and your fixedness of purpose and your able pen have maintained for the last six years as the standard and rallying point of patriotism, every one of us Confederates—even Mitchel—would have remained in dull, hopeless obscurity. We would doubtless have grumbled at our firesides, and bemoaned our fate in being born Irish slaves, or probably some of us would have gone into exile, rather than remain subjects of the foreign tyrant; but there would not have been an Irish National party; we would not have caught the inspiration of hope; we would not have enjoyed the happiness of looking forward to the prospect of our country's freedom, and the happiness of working for the liberation of our country. And slight, or even valueless, as my own endeavours to work have been, I assure you, and you will readily believe, that I count imprisonment for ten years a very cheap purchase for the enjoyment I have had in those attempts to work. And this enjoyment I owe in great measure to you."—Richmond Prison, December 13th, 1848.

from Newgate, inviting him to extend his historical enquiries to the reign of Queen Victoria, and enclosing, as a treasure-trove, the panel in my own case. I suggested doubts whether the Stuarts had not fallen short of the skill which prepared for an Irish Nationalist, under a Liberal Government, with a philosophical historian in its Cabinet, a panel like mine.

Among the array of my peers and neighbours indifferently chosen, he would find the jeweller of the Lord-Lieutenant, the hairdresser of the Lord-Lieutenant, his Excellency's shoemaker, the chandler to the Chief Secretary, the bootmaker to the Commander of the forces, the engineer to the Drainage Commissioners, the cutler, grocer, and purveyor to the Castle, the saddler and seedsman of a former Lord-Lieutenant, three Government contractors, a compositor in the College Printing Office, two vicars choral of St. Patrick's Cathedral, the auctioneer to the Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and the Consul of King Ernest of Hanover. This model panel, which contained but twenty Catholics, who by their position on it were likely to be called upon before a jury was sworn, contained nevertheless eleven Englishmen or Scotchmen and one Frenchman; and, though there were 4,000 qualified persons from whom to select, it contained thirty jurors either challenged by the prisoner, or set aside by the Crown, on former trials.

To Richard Sheil I wrote a note, a copy of which I have found among my papers of that date:—

"I have just risen from reading your speech at the meeting

in January, 1844, when all the Catholics were struck off the jury in the case of "O'Connell and others," and I cannot resist the impulse of writing to you. Among these obscure and anonymous "others" I, as you know, was one; and the day on which that speech was delivered I did not conceive it to be in the whole range of human probabilities that at a future trial I would have to apprehend a similar wrong from a ministry of whom you were one. But so it stands. Mitchel, Martin, and O'Doherty, who have been already tried and convicted, were tried by juries on which there was not so much as one Catholic. And a similar one is predestined for me a week hence. Now, I am curious to know what you, Richard Sheil, the Catholic champion (of whom I have still certain boyish recollections not altogether effaced) think of this business? It will save you the embarrassment of weighing all the ingenious excuses for putting aside the particular Catholics in my case, which doubtless will be forthcoming at the proper time, if you consider the question now in the abstract, when the jury is not sworn, nor the panel so much as arrayed. For I forewarn you that it is determined to allow no Catholic on my jury—not one; no more than if John Keogh and all succeeding Catholic agitators had never existed. This is the fact we have to deal with in this nineteenth year after Emancipation. Perhaps a poor prisoner under the ban of the angry law has no right to trouble your repose with disagreeable questions. I trust, however, you will not think so; for I forewarn you I promise myself an answer now, or at some other time and place, when it will be still less agreeable to be questioned on this matter. Pack they my jury never so securely, you and I will meet again, where a thousand echoes will take up my question and repeat it in every tongue that has syllabled the name of Richard Sheil."

It is possible that this correspondence may have helped to make the Government ashamed of their practices. But I had powerful auxiliaries in the attempt, prompted by a gifted kinswoman.

Frederick Lucas exposed the iniquities complained of with singular power. When a just Englishman comes to criticise Irish abuses familiarity has not deadened his indignation, and he flames out in heroic wrath. In Ireland journalists had witnessed these practices for a lifetime, and spontaneous anger was not to be expected. But one man, who had never written in newspapers and rarely read them, brought the force of a powerful and unjaded intellect to the controversy, and burned the facts into the public mind. Dr. Murray, Professor of Theology at Maynooth, in a series of letters, signed "An Irish Priest," influenced opinion as anonymous letters had scarcely done since the Drapier's. He addressed them to the Attorney-General, and separating himself from the opinions of Young Ireland, which he did not share, and from any personal ill-will to the man, which he did not feel, on the ground common to both of them of an Irish Catholic Liberal, overwhelmed him with shame and scorn.*

On the 30th October O'Doherty was tried for the third time. On this occasion the jury were more securely packed, and they found him guilty, but strongly recommended him to mercy. This young

* If it should be believed by Englishmen that the complaint of packed juries was the clamour of Irish rebels, it may be useful to remind them that the very Ministers in office when these things were done had themselves denounced the system four years earlier, when they were in Opposition. Speaking of the jury in O'Connell's case, Lord John Russell said: "Ten Roman Catholics and two Liberal Protestants were struck out by the Solicitor of the Crown. It does, sir, appear to me that such a fact of itself deprives the whole of the proceedings of any weight or value." In the same debate, Sir George Grey said: "The trial—a trial of Catholics—took place in a country seven-eighths of the population of which were Roman Catholics, and yet not one Catholic could be found qualified to sit

man, still under age, against whom nothing personal had been proved, was accorded the mercy of ten years' transportation. He wished to criticise the method of his trial, but the Court peremptorily forbade him. He admitted that he desired an open, honourable resistance to the Government because of the misery they inflicted on the people, but he expressed his strong disapproval of one of the articles in his indictment—proposing to throw burning hoops upon soldiers. He could endure the verdict of twelve conscientious enemies with patience, but he would never cease to deplore the unhappy destiny, which gave him birth in a country where he was compelled to receive a felon's doom for doing his public duty.

The trial of Williams immediately followed, and ended as he had foreseen. His domestic servant proved that he was detained at home by illness during the fortnight before his arrest, and persons connected with his printing office gave corroborative evidence. A clergyman and a doctor described his religious and benevolent character. The indictment did not charge that any of the articles were in his handwriting, and no witness was called upon to identify his manuscript. Mr.

upon the jury who were to try the issue—not one whose sympathies were not enlisted with the traversers, not one who was considered a safe man to trust with the investigation of the crime of which the accused stood charged. . . . Such an admission must, I repeat, deprive the verdict of all the moral weight and effect which ought, under other circumstances, to have attached to it." Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Macaulay, in their respective Houses, expressed similar opinions. And in Ireland, Mr. Monahan, the Attorney-General who was now excluding Catholics; Serjeant O'Brien, who was aiding and abetting him; Mr. Redington, the Under-Secretary; and Messrs. Sheil, Wyse, and O'Ferrall, who held office in England, had denounced the practice on the same occasion.

Ferguson, who was his leading counsel, made a persuasive and sympathetic speech, but the Crown solicitor had rendered his task easy. The jury wished to return a verdict of publishing, but not with the intent imputed in the indictment, but the Court would not receive it, and after a slight delay they declared him not guilty.

The breach in the indictment on my third arraignment greatly damaged the Attorney-General in public opinion. His management of the case was pronounced by a sarcastic critic to be an Iliad of blunders. He ought to have made the law formidable, it was said, and he only made it contemptible. He ought to have won public sympathy for the prosecution, and he only won it for the prisoner; but though he was a man of violent passions, it was admitted that he had shown coolness and courage under exasperating defeats and the harassing criticism of Mr. Butt.* His colleague, the Solicitor-General, was a man of rude manners and imperfect education, who came to the bar late in life, and had read nothing but reports and text books. Amusing stories of his ignorance flew about, some of which were certainly well founded. There was a reference in one of the prosecuted

* My counsel throughout the long contest were Mr. Butt, Sir Colman O'Loghlen, and Mr. John O'Hagan, now Mr. Justice O'Hagan, Chief Commissioner of the Land Court, to whom Mr. Holmes and Mr. Napier were added in the first instance. Mr. Butt had the conduct of the case, and O'Loghlen and O'Hagan anticipated the questions of law that would arise, and prepared the line of defence and attack. If you convict the prisoner—this was the ground they took up—it must be in strict accordance with law; we will not suffer any unfair practice to pass without resistance, however long it may have prevailed in Irish courts. Mr. Edward O'Rourke was attorney for Martin and O'Doherty, Mr. W. J. Foley (since M.P. for New Ross) for Williams, and Mr. John Teeling for me.

articles to Thomas Fitzgerald, Viceroy in the time of Henry VIII., known from his gorgeous apparel as "Silken Thomas." Who was Silken Thomas? Mr. Hatchell demanded *sotto voce* of the bar. "Silken Thomas," said the smiling junior for the prisoner, "was an eminent Queen's Counsel!" * A letter given in evidence contained an allusion to Lafayette. "When did Lafayette die?" Mr. Hatchell asked in a whisper. Wilson Gray, who sat among the junior bar within hearing, volunteered the information that he had died eight or ten years before. "Pooh, Sir," rejoined the Solicitor-General with marked contempt, "I am speaking of the first Lafayette, who took part in the great French revolution."

To get a verdict of acquittal was beyond the range of possibility. Saul of Tarsus would not have moved twelve Castle jurors to declare that the provocation justified the offence. What was perhaps practicable was to make a conviction impossible. And if anything could revive the spirit of the country, a failure in this case, where the Government had shown such inordinate vindictiveness, would, it might be hoped, have that effect. Now, for the first time, I applied myself seriously to this task.

As the opening of the fourth Commission approached, I found myself the sole political prisoner untried. Of the batch who had been in Newgate with me, one had been acquitted, two convicted, and twenty discharged

* A certain eminent counsel, who had recently taken silk, and whose voice and manners were particularly suave and gentle, has since been known at the bar as Silken Thomas.

without conditions. The prisoners in Cork, Kilkenny, and Galway had also been released, but I was awaiting a fourth indictment, and the Government were so confident of success that the frigate destined to carry me to penal solitude could be named by confidants of the Castle.* On the 15th February the Commission opened. The indictment on which the Attorney-General insisted on transporting me in the previous month was not considered sufficient, and a new one was framed. Some one described the Government case as a Colt's revolver with a fresh barrel always ready to be discharged at the prisoner. A legal critic declared that the whole code of criminal law applicable to political cases was at length being settled—at the cost of Mr. Duffy.

Our first desire was to obtain a copy of the panel, but the Crown counsel refused it. It is a right in treason and a usage in felony cases; in Scotland it had recently been furnished a fortnight before the trial. When I pleaded to the newly found indictment, I was ignorant of the name of every juror on the panel; but we had become familiar with wrong, and we provided for this contingency. When the panel was at length read, my counsel challenged the array, and while the argument was proceeding, I had the list printed, and circulated all over Dublin by a Confederate police, with instructions to bring me back, promptly, annotated copies of it from the friends to whom it was sent. It was a picture to look at the angry front of Mr. Hatchell as

* A list of the State prisoners under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, will be found in a note at the end of the chapter.

copy after copy of the annotated panel was carried to me in the dock, and I prepared instructions for counsel in exercising their challenges. It is a fact on which statesmen might ponder with advantage, that men who before and after kissed hands at the Castle Drawing-room and dined at the Lodge in Phœnix Park, were among those who furnished this information; so faint is the sympathy between Irish opinion and English authority. Men will scarcely credit at this time of day that a row of detectives were placed round the dock to peer over my shoulders at the papers furnished to me, and that I could barely protect my secrets from these Castle spies.*

At last the process of swearing a jury began. It was understood that the public rage against jury-packing had so far prevailed that the Government would not venture to insist on an exclusive jury. But the Catholic Attorney-General, Catholic Crown counsel, and Catholic Under-Secretary were confident that they knew men of their own creed and kidney, who would find a verdict for the Castle, and not for the country. For by this time the contest had become a purely political one; as purely political as it was in Westminster when the seven bishops were on trial; when no one any longer thought

* To some good men this will seem the morbid suspicion of a prisoner, who persuaded himself to believe in an impossible villainy. But mark this fact: when the formation of the panel and the jury in Mr. Mitchel's case was brought under the notice of the House of Commons (July 21st, '48), the Home Secretary declared that the Attorney-General set aside six persons on that occasion because they were marked "fit to be retained on the jury" in a private panel annotated by the prisoner and his solicitor. The Executive had taken means to make themselves master of the private documents prepared for the prisoner's defence. This is the same baseness in a more aggravated form, and it was admitted in the face of Parliament.

of the technical question, whether some obscure or vicious Act of Parliament had been violated, but whether oppression, or resistance to oppression, was to be supported. Jurors have claimed it as their inalienable right to pierce through the outer filaments of law and determine on the intrinsic justice of great cases. James II. could not coerce a jury to convict the bishops, though the letter of the law was against them; neither Cromwell nor Charles Stuart could persuade juries to strike down John Lilburne the Puritan. The statutes against duelling were as plain as the multiplication-table, but juries are judges of the law as well as the fact, and of the equity as well as the law, and found verdicts in defiance of them. An Irish juror who consulted his conscience on that day might well doubt whether the true offender, upon whom public justice ought to be executed, stood at the bar or sat in the high places of the land.

The twelfth juror called was Mr. Martin Burke, owner of the Shelbourne Hotel. Thackeray, in his "Irish Sketch Book," describes a fashionable hotel in Dublin, frequented by the gentry, and where the proprietor lived like one of the class he entertained. "The hotel is magnificently conducted by clerks and other officers; the landlord himself does not appear after the honest, comfortable English fashion, but lives in a private mansion hard by, where his name may be read inscribed on a brass-plate, like that of any other private gentleman."* This was Mr. Burke. He was a Catholic; but his tastes, pursuits, and

* "Irish Sketch Book," Chap. I

interests might be regarded as binding him fast to the class who detested the prisoner at the bar. When I gave the panel to my counsel with the names marked which I wished to be challenged, I allowed his name to pass, and they immediately called my attention to the omission, and insisted that he was put on the panel because he was certain to be swayed by the prejudice of the class by whom he lived, and to furnish a plausible answer to the charge of excluding Catholics. Against all remonstrance I persisted in retaining him. By-and-bye, O'Loghlen whispered to me that Butt intended to take the responsibility on himself of superseding my instructions, and objecting to Mr. Burke. My answer was so decisive that he reluctantly yielded. When the book was put into the juror's hand, one of the judges withdrew from the court for a moment, and in his absence some members of the junior bar, especially Mr. Stritch, came to the dock in a panic, to warn me that I was throwing away my last chance. I answered all their remonstrances with a silent shake of the head. My confidence was not founded on any knowledge of Mr. Burke; I had never exchanged greeting with him, and scarcely knew his person. But a lady called my attention, on the opening of the court, to the fact that in the gallery, directly opposite the jurors' box, two ladies sat, who were Mr. Burke's wife and daughter; and I was confident that the Irish hearts of these two women would exercise a silent mesmerism over the juror, stronger than personal or party interest. Mr. Burke was sworn on the jury.

To regain my liberty seemed nearly hopeless, but I might at least save my character from Lord Clarendon's hired slanderers, and from other shameless assailants on the right hand and the left. A contemporary writer * described the Castle press of that day in terms which will scarcely realise that volcano of filth, to men of the present time :—

"Three times a week these full and fetid jaws were opened to vomit forth such abominable slanders as modest men could sometimes hardly read without a blush, and timid men without a shudder. If a convent were sacked in one place and its inmates violated—if a church were desecrated in another place—if in another a man's brains were dashed out or his throat cut—if anywhere some blasphemy uttered or some theory of organised plunder advanced—if there occurred an anti-social commotion among the canaille of the faubourgs or clubs of Paris, straightway these men, locked up in jail, were marked as the men who designed to introduce the same system and enact the same horrors in Ireland; straightway the Castle witch sent forth a direful howl and stretched out her long, brown, skinny arms to protect the altars and the homes of Irishmen from the demon assaults of Duffy, and Meagher, and the rest. The effect produced was really tremendous. The belief became very general, among the readers of the Orange papers and the *Evening Post*, that such must be the facts regarding the prisoners; they were stated so confidently, so circumstantially, so constantly."

Before the *Post* and the *World* commenced operations, Mr. John O'Connell had spread the occult suspicion that the Young Irelanders were sceptics, his ally, Mr. Barrett, was still earning a little wages by kindred labours, and the Solicitor-General at

* The Irish Priest, Rev. Dr. Murray.

O'Brien's trial had prepared my destruction from far off. But none of these things moved me more than the desire to separate myself from the base counsels by which the people had been taught to make war with vitriol bottles and flaming hoops, and from the malignant Jacobinism, which could recognise in difference of opinion only cowardice or perfidy. Prelates and other eminent ecclesiastics, and distinguished peers and gentlemen, spoke of my public life as it presented itself to them. Fr. Mathew volunteered to specify the theories of education and discipline which I had endeavoured to engraft on teetotalism; and William Carleton described what he considered I had done for national literature. Dr. Maunsell came from the office of the *Evening Mail* to say what a loyal Protestant thought of the Young Irelanders. * If a powerful Government or powerful factions conspired to destroy a public man, he or those interested in him are entitled to confront the falsehood with the truth. The effect on

* At the same time Mr. Price, the editor of the *Evening Packet*, the extreme Orange organ (who was vehemently protesting against the repeated trials to which I had been subjected), wrote to me in Newgate:—"It may be a gratification to you to know that the chief reasons which made me your advocate—apart from my belief in your sincerity and knowledge of your ability—and the first facts that made me view with favour your cause, were your enthusiastic struggles to vindicate the genius, character, and motives of your friend Davis." A correspondent of the *Tablet* analysed the evidence in this way. "It began with his early manhood:—'How do you know that this broad sheet contains a correct report of a speech delivered so long ago as 1840?' said the Attorney-General to Father Mathew. 'Because,' replied the illustrious reformer, 'I printed it myself; it is one of thirty thousand copies which I circulated among the teetotalers of Ireland.' The Irish Council was an attempt to unite classes and to found a great national party. 'I was a member,' says Dr. Maunsell; 'I joined at the urgent request of Mr. Duffy.' 'It was there we made Mr. Duffy's acquaintance,' said Lord Cloncurry and Mr. Herrick, and the latter added a significant truth—'from the opinions

the jury was salutary, but I valued more the effect on that section of the community which knew least of me personally. If the cause I represented was to be kept alive and to succeed in the end, it was by allying itself with sobriety and good sense; and if I could win with my own resources a battle more protracted and hopeless than O'Connell had fought with a national treasury at his back, I was confident that that success would be the guarantee of more important victories.

During the greater part of the trial a majority of the jury were prepared for an acquittal; but in the end they were persuaded to agree to a conviction on a single count—with the exception of Mr. Burke, who would not sanction any verdict of guilty. They were locked up all night under the usual conditions, but as the life of one of the jurors was in danger, they were discharged at ten o'clock next morning.*

I was sent back to prison, and a flood of passionate indignation burst forth. A document was framed enumerating the unprecedented practices adopted in my

floating in my mind about the editor of the *Nation* before I entered the council, I was astonished to find his views so rational and just.' The Confederation was another attempt to found a party on a national basis, and he brought some of the most important recruits into it. 'I was a member of the Confederation,' said Ross of Bladensburgh, a Conservative landlord, in his evidence, 'Mr. Duffy induced me to join it.' It was proposed to show how much of the time and fortune of this man, slandered by the Castle press, had gone to forward great public objects; but though evidence of this sort had been admitted on the trial of Horne Tooke, the court refused to allow it. One pregnant fact, however, was fortunately not shut out. 'Mr. Duffy,' says Carleton, 'has given a greater impulse to Irish literature than any man living.' A memorable epitaph if he die in the hands of his gaolers."

* He refused to convict, as he afterwards explained, not because the prisoner was not technically guilty of the offence charged in the indictment, but because in certain cases there is a justice beyond the law.

case, and demanding that there might be an end of them and of the prosecution. Ten thousand of the citizens of Dublin of all parties, many of the foremost men in commerce, literature, and the professions, even the jury who had been willing to convict me, signed this document. Several of the chief towns north and south followed their example. The Irish electors in certain English and Scotch boroughs called on their representatives to interpose. It was plainly the opinion of large masses of men that the ordinary course of justice had been departed from, and that public opinion ought to stand between the prosecutors and the prisoner.*

I was at length removed to Richmond Penitentiary,

A Protestant jury in Dublin declined to find a true bill against Swift for the technical sedition of the Drapier's fourth letter; an Orange jury in the same city refused to find bills against rioters who flung missiles at a Lord Lieutenant hostile to Protestant ascendancy, and they were honoured as patriots. The evidence, the law, and the judge's charge were dead against the prisoners whom Titus Oates sent to the scaffold, but the jurors who convicted them are infamous because the essential truth differed from the law and the evidence.

* The public sympathy expressed itself at this time in another manner. A committee was appointed under the direction of Fr. Mathew, to raise a public fund to pay the expenses of the long prosecution. But when I read the fact in the newspapers, I wrote a letter to the Secretary requesting that the project might be abandoned. If, as was too likely, I was an unprofitable servant, I would not, in any case, consent to be a hired one. A paragraph from the *Freeman's Journal* at this time discloses a fact which ought to be kept in memory. It reads like a story from Venice under the Austrians:—"The public will learn, not without indignation and astonishment, that for the last six months every letter and newspaper addressed to Mr. Duffy as editor of the *Nation* has been opened and detained at the Post Office, without the smallest notice to him. Having heard by accident, at the end of six months, of the practice, he applied for his letters (which, for aught he knows, may contain large remittances, or information more important than money), and was informed that the letters were actually detained (on the plea that there was no editor of the *Nation* when the paper ceased), and that all the secretary of the Post Office could do in the matter was to refer the question to his solicitor."—*Freeman's Journal.*

but I was not allowed to communicate with my friends, who were already tried, and never saw them, except the Catholics at service on Sunday. At this time nearly thirty Irish members, moved by their constituents, waited on Lord Clarendon in London, and urged that the prosecution ought to be abandoned. He answered angrily that I was undoubtedly guilty, that I had "exhibited no signs of repentance," and "had not expressed the smallest regret." Some of the members told him that the guilt of a person prosecuted in a court of law was ascertained by the verdict of a jury, and that they did not know any other method of ascertaining it. Lord Clarendon had his policy and his official position to maintain, and he was very emphatic before the public. But he was secretly disturbed and shaken by opposition from so many quarters, and his colleagues, who had no personal feelings involved, were probably weary of the scandal and discredit. Mr. Fagan, one of the members for Cork, a timid, but respectable and well-intentioned man, was made the medium of a semi-official communication :—

"If Mr. Duffy," he wrote, "made any concession, so as to give the Government a fair excuse to escape from the whole affair, an amnesty extending to all would be the result." *

As this was a proposal affecting all the prisoners, I showed it to the Governor, and asked him that I might see my friends. We had one benefit, at any rate, from the overture; after long separation, I spent an evening

* William Fagan, M.P., to C. S. Ralph.

with O'Brien, Meagher, McManus, Martin, and the rest. With their entire concurrence, I had a reply returned to Mr. Fagan that Mr. Duffy would not make any concession.

Would there be a fifth trial? Public opinion, not only in Ireland but in England, declared that there had been trials more than enough. Some of the comic newspapers in London depicted the prisoner returning to his family with a flowing white beard, to indicate the inordinate period over which the trials had been protracted; and the serious ones demanded if the interest of justice or peace could be served by proceedings which had manifestly become vindictive.*

On the 10th April, '49, in the tenth month of my imprisonment, I was again brought to trial. In all the previous Commissions I had escaped in direct consequence of the inordinate means taken to convict me, and on this occasion I had the same good fortune.

* Lord Clarendon could no longer reckon on the sympathy, or even the silence, of the Press which supported the Government. Before the last trial, the *Daily News* wrote:—"We have no sympathy with a policy whose acts, however they may be worded, wear, in the estimation of an unresentful public, the aspect of political vindictiveness. Every right may be abused; and the right of the Crown to indict an accused party again and again and again, if pressed still further, may degenerate into something very like a wrong. . . Mr. Duffy was put into confinement before Ballingarry, but being justly suspected of participation in the same dangerous insanity, and being recognised as the man who had had the greatest amount of talent and influence amongst them, it did not seem strange that the same rigour which had been meted out to the rest should be measured also to him. To this nobody, we believe, of any sense or judgment objected. It was unavoidable, it was expedient, it was merciful, and it was just. We can neither discern, however, the necessity, the prudence, the clemency, or the justice, of putting the accused upon his trial under existing circumstances for the fourth time. . . Twenty-seven members of the House of Commons, comprising men of every diversity of party feeling, subscribed a memorial to Lord Clarendon some days ago in favour of a different course. Our respect for the talent and services of his

The Government had conceived a new device. Felony cases are invariably tried by a common jury. So they had been tried for centuries. So Mitchel, Martin, Williams, and O'Doherty had been tried. But the panel arrayed for this Commission consisted of special jurors alone. Every name was taken from a list composed according to statute of "the sons of peers, baronets, and knights, magistrates, ex-sheriffs, esquires, bankers, merchants and traders worth £5,000."

The first impediment the public prosecutor had to face was that the jurors would no longer attend. When the panel was called over only seventy out of a hundred and seventy jurors answered to their names. It was called again on a heavy penalty, and only ninety answered. Eighty jurors refused, by their absence, to take any further part in the proceedings. Fines of £50 could not induce them to array themselves against a public feeling which had grown so strong and vehement.

Only ninety answered. The prisoner has a right

lordship cannot exonerate us from the unpleasing duty of saying that we neither concur in the wisdom of his refusal to regard the prayer of the memorial, or the validity of the reasons he thought fit to assign for the determination. . . . A memorial similar in its object, but much stronger in its language, has already received upwards of 7,000 signatures in the city of Dublin. Amongst these are to be found the names of many of the wealthiest and most distinguished citizens of the Irish metropolis—a great number of the clergy of various denominations—but, what is more significant, of the leading men of opposite local parties and conflicting political sentiments. It is idle to affect indifference to such manifestations of opinion. In the face of a general declaration *like this*, another trial of Mr. Duffy would be an act of inconceivable folly. Ten of the twelve jurors who were impanelled to try him last February have subscribed the memorial that he should not again be set up as a target for the random aim of the Irish Attorney-General." Carlyle indicated to one of my counsel (Mr. John O'Hagan) that there was a reserve force of indignation at Chelsea, which might be heard of in the case if things came to the worst.

to set aside twenty peremptorily, and here were twenty of the worst jurors to be struck off at a blow. Three jurors were excused by the Court on the plea of ill-health—that accommodating sickness which seizes gentlemen who find it inconvenient to keep their appointments. They were sick, a sly junior suggested, of a fifth repetition of "the" Queen against Duffy.

And now the inordinate rancour of the Government brought its own punishment. No one who serves on a grand jury, which finds an indictment against a prisoner, can serve on a petty jury which tries him for the same offence. As special jurors are the class from whom grand juries are composed, and as five indictments had been found against me during the last ten months, a considerable number of the panel were disqualified. It was a high enjoyment to many of the spectators to see Mr. Butt, when some respectable Castle-hack took the book in hand, ask him if he had not served on a grand jury which had found a bill against the prisoner; and when he admitted that he had, courteously wave him aside. To be a juror in felony, the law requires that a man shall reside in the district where the offence is charged; but these respectable special jurors had country residences at Kingstown, Rathfarnum, Roebuck, or Black Rock. The audience could not restrain their laughter when Mr. Butt, with a pleasant smile, asked some Tory squire, or retired official, Where he resided? and on getting his answer express his great regret that the prisoner could not have the benefit of his services on that occasion. But there was still

another objection, and one not heard of in a court before. Jurors over sixty years of age were entitled to excuse themselves from serving on that plea. Pondering over the Act of Parliament in prison, it struck me that the law not only excused, but prohibited, such persons from sitting on juries. I submitted this point to my counsel, who concurred in it; and when a grey-haired old gentleman, who had listened to Norbury's jokes and Saurin's sneers, presented himself to be sworn, Mr. Butt politely ascertained his age and took the objection. The point was argued and decided with us, and a number of venerable persons, who had sat on juries in the high tide of Protestant ascendancy, were got rid of. The Crown, on their part, set aside the jurors most objectionable to them as they appeared—three Protestants and fifteen Catholics, and in the end the panel was reduced to such a condition that it was impossible to constitute a jury without admitting some Liberal Protestants and Catholics. There were not twelve pure Castle-hacks left.

Of the jurors sworn, I have good reason to know that some of them entered the box with a strong prejudice against me, begotten of the writings in the Castle Press, but it gradually gave way before the evidence, and one of the most practical and persuasive speeches ever addressed to a jury. It was Good Friday —a day unusually cold and bitter—and I was only allowed to retire long after night had fallen, and the jury were sent to their box to consider their verdict.*

* The Government had great difficulty in proving my handwriting. For a long time they could not even identify it to their own satisfaction

It was midnight when I was recalled to hear my fate. The Court was as crowded as a theatre on a command night, with an audience of both sexes and all ranks in the city. There was silence as in a church. The judge despatched the Sheriff to ascertain whether the jury had agreed to their verdict. He remained away five, eight, ten minutes. "They are writing their verdict," was the whispered opinion. The Sheriff returned, crossed the Court to his own box in solemn silence, and then, after a theatrical pause, announced that the jury could not agree. A shout of triumph, that made the roof ring, burst from the audience. The jury were called into Court, and they told the judge that

for the purpose of preparing a prosecution. There were many hundred persons in Dublin who knew it as well as they knew my name, but they were not at the disposal of the Castle. From the latter difficulty they were relieved in a memorable manner. Mr. James McGlashan, publisher of the *University Magazine*, had had some correspondence with me (as the reader may have noticed), always to promote interests of his own; to obtain advice or money for the benefit of his firm; and this generous Scotchman came to the aid of the prosecution by visiting the Castle and identifying my MSS. He could not be expected to appear in court, but once they knew the handwriting the difficulty disappeared. An English printer named Lowe, who had been employed for a short time in the *Nation* office (and who admitted on cross-examination that he left owing me a sum of money, which he never paid), mounted the witness-table and gave the necessary evidence. This was scarcely enough, however, and Mr. Verdon, from the Stamp Office, supplemented it. A newspaper proprietor is bound, under a certain penalty, to send a copy of each number of his journal to the Distributor of Stamps, signed with his name, and from seeing my name weekly for many years, Mr. Verdon considered himself competent to prove my handwriting generally. On cross-examination the nature of the knowledge on which he acted got disclosed—on a former trial he had sworn confidently to my signature on a number of papers—but after his evidence was given, it was demonstrated that the signature was not mine. I had authorised a clerk to sign for me, preferring to risk the penalty rather than attend the office at publication hour (which was long after midnight), and Mr. Verdon had confidently sworn that the clerk's writing was mine. The documents attributed to me on the present occasion were undoubtedly mine, but they were not proven by evidence on which a conscientious juror could act.

they were divided half and half. Bankers, magistrates, manufacturers, desired to pronounce a verdict of not guilty. They were locked up all night, and twelve hours' reflection added one more to the number for acquittal. It was worth enduring a long imprisonment to look on the beaming faces and clasp the generous hands that thronged round the dock that night.

There was a consultation in Newgate next morning. My counsel advised that a new trial should be demanded forthwith. With a panel so scuttled, the Government could not complete a jury without admitting some of the men they had ordered to stand aside the day before. "If they try you again," said Mr. Butt, "you will be acquitted; and they must try you, or open the door." On this agreement we returned to court to see the jury discharged; but the Crown counsel had been consulting also; the state of the case was as plain to them as to us, and when Mr. Butt rose to make his demand, the Attorney-General precipitately consented to admit me to bail, to avoid the shame of an acquittal; and so I saw the daylight again. I walked out amongst stalwart men whose manly faces were wet with tears, the counsel who had sheltered me with such indomitable perseverance, and a few dear friends who had made light in the prison darkness. No cause and effect are more closely connected than the malignity of Lord Clarendon and my escape from transportation.*

* Mr. Mitchel, in a "History of Ireland" which professed, as a guarantee of fairness, to exclude the writer's estimate of his contemporaries, gives this imaginative account of the method of my escape:—"Duffy's jury disagreed, and he was retained in prison till a more tractable

jury could be manufactured. Again he was brought to trial, and again the jury disagreed. Still he was kept in custody, though his health was rapidly failing; and at last, when all apprehension of trouble seemed to be over, and the more dangerous conspirators were disposed of, the Government yielded to a memorial on his behalf and abandoned the prosecution." —Mitchel's "History of Ireland."

Smith O'Brien's account of the same transaction was different:—"The manly vigour with which you sustained a succession of trials unexampled in the annals of judicature, has rendered that defence a remarkable event, not only in your own personal biography, but also in the history of Ireland."—Letter of W. S. O'Brien, Brussels, Sept. 11th, '55.

The London Press generally expressed satisfaction with the result. One example will suffice. "As we never felt a deeper interest in any trial, so we never were more gratified with the result. What we said on a late occasion we repeat now,—Mr. Duffy is not only a man of superior intellect, but of the purest patriotism, and of spotless integrity both in the public and private relations of life. In the high character of Mr. Duffy are to be found the secret and the source of that profound sympathy which has been so universally felt in his case—and scarcely more universally felt in his own country than on this side of the Channel."—*Daily News.*

I add one extract from the Irish Press. "Is Lord Clarendon satisfied now? Just before Mr. Duffy was put on trial a second time his Excellency pronounced him guilty of treason-felony. Two juries—twenty-four men on their oaths—could not arrive at the same conclusion. Fortunately for Mr. Duffy there is in these countries no vice-regal road to verdicts. Seven of the last jury were for acquitting Mr. Duffy, and five for a modified verdict; not one would find him guilty of the transportable offence. . . . Mr. Duffy leaves the jail as the conqueror of the Whigs in Ireland. To crush him they left no villainy undone. They have failed —blessed be Almighty God! disgracefully failed. Their persecution has but made him more dear to his country, as his country's sufferings made her more dear to him. He comes to us with the flowers of spring, and they are not more welcome."—*Freeman's Journal.*

NOTES ON CHAP. V.

I. Political Prisoners in 1848.

The following persons were arrested under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act:—

"James Fintan Lalor, John Hughes, Eugene O'Reilly, Thomas Bergin, James Crotty, William Walsh, James Baker, Edward Behan, Andrew Behan, John Sheehan, Henry Broxton, Richard Johnston, John B. Russell, James Purcell, Edward Smith, James O'Donnell, Edward S. Egan, Michael Doherty, Nicholas Nagle, James Russell, Denny Lane, Felix Mullin, Isaac Varian, Ralph Varian, Michael J. Berry, Robert Cane, M.D., Coll Rochford, Ed. Butler, J. F. Blake, Laurence Geoghegan, Patrick Marron, Anthony O'Ryan, M.D., Francis O'Ryan, Charles Taaffe, barrister, Gilbert Whyte, Francis Hanvey, J. E. O'Donohue, James Doyle, William M'Carron, M.D., Charles H. West, M.D., T. M'Grade,

T. Whitty, Thomas F. Strange, James Supple, Patrick Condon, James Fogarty, Barthw. Downey, Peter Walsh, Matthew King, R. Lambkin, James R. Baxter, John Hickey, M. Hanley, John Lawless, James Bergin, John De Courcy Young, Philip Kennedy, C. R. Mahony, Stewart Wright, Richard Franks Ryan, Timothy Sexton, J. F. Lalor, Eugene Martin, Owen O'Neil, R. Dalton, W. Fuller Harnett, Gerald Supple, F. T. Gabbett, J. Martin Burke, P. Mulhare, E. Lombard, P. M'Kenzie, J. M'Grath, G. Taaffe, Wm. Mathews, T. M'Namara, M. O'Neil, Richard O'Shaughnessy, P. Coonan, T. P. O'Flanagan, P. M'Auliffe, D. Corcoran, P. O'Donnell, P. Dunn, J. M. O'Ryan, P. Conway, J. Killilea, T. Hennessy, Pierse Power, G. Cannody, D. M'Carthy, T. Kehoe, G. Whelan, J. O'Grady, E. Trouton, James M'Kenna, William Wall, and James Jennings."

II. The Letter found in O'Brien's Portmanteau.

It is characteristic of O'Brien that after I, and every one else, had forgotten the letter found in his portmanteau, it was still a trouble to his sensitive conscience and generous nature. While we were both prisoners he wrote me this letter on the subject:—

"My dear Duffy,—Among the circumstances which have occurred in connection with my defeat, capture, trial, and conviction, few have occasioned to me so much anxiety as the act of inadvertence which placed in the hands of the Government the letter from you which has been so much relied upon as an evidence of a treasonable conspiracy. I have not been able to think or speak without indignation of the baseness displayed by the functionaries of the Government in making use of a document acquired under such circumstances as those by which it came into their possession—a more flagrant violation of an engagement, which ought to have been binding among gentlemen and men of honour, could not have taken place than occurred in rifling my portmanteau with a view to extract from it evidence of guilt. It will be satisfactory to you to know that I am not disposed to think that your letter had any material effect in producing my conviction. I flatter myself also with the belief that it will be useful rather than injurious to you. It will clearly prove to all unprejudiced men that you and I contemplated a change (call it a Revolution, if you please) which was to be neither anarchical nor bloody.

"I would have written to you sooner if I could have said anything calculated to relieve your mind from solicitude, but whilst in Kilmainham I was under engagement not to write upon political subjects to political allies, and since I have been here I have not been able to communicate anything which I deem satisfactory. I cannot, however, allow your trial to take place without soliciting your forgiveness for the act of indiscretion which placed in the hands of your accusers a document which a perverse malignity may distort to your disadvantage.

"With respect to our wrecked hopes I shall say nothing, save that I trust each man amongst us will be sustained by the same consciousness which upholds, animates, and cheers me, that we severally and collectively hazarded everything dear to us in an honourable and disinterested effort to serve our native land.

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"Clonmel Gaol, "William S. O'Brien.
Feb. 10, 1847."

CHAPTER VI.

FATE OF THE CONFEDERATES.

A WRIT of error was sued out in the Queen's Bench, in the case of the Clonmel prisoners, on grounds purely technical; and they were still at Richmond Bridewell when I became free to visit them. I found O'Brien labouring at the eternal task of his correspondence, and Meagher in a cell, bright with scarlet cloth, which his books and manuscripts, and a few portraits, transformed into a pleasant study. McManus had got a box of tools and was manufacturing nick-nacks, and O'Doherty was busy with professional studies. The younger prisoners were in excellent, sometimes exuberant, spirits; and O'Brien and Martin maintained a tranquil dignity in their tragic position, very touching to a comrade who had escaped the same penalties. Of McManus a private letter of the period says:—

"I never saw a man so much improved. He has a most gentlemanly carriage and bearing since he became an insurrectionary chief, and is now really the best looking of the batch."

But the sight which surprised me most was Daniel Doyle, who had been O'Gorman's aide-de-camp at

Limerick, walking in and out of the prison at discretion, under a feigned name, the Government and the public believing him to be at Constantinople.

The moment the Clonmel trials closed, a movement commenced in the great towns to obtain an amnesty for the prisoners, or, if this proved impossible, to save their lives. The Government were willing to avoid the odium of inflicting capital punishment, but they had not the wisdom and courage to disarm honourable men by a great act of magnanimity. The writ of error was decided against the prisoners, first in the Queen's Bench, and afterwards before the House of Lords, who held that there was no ground for any of the errors assigned. Lord John Russell then announced that the Queen would be advised to commute the sentence of death into transportation for life. But O'Brien and his companions declared that they preferred death to perpetual transportation. In the state of the law at that time their consent was indispensable, and as they persistently refused it, the strange spectacle was seen of a special Act hurriedly passed through Parliament, to enable the Queen to authorise the mitigation of punishment which they declined.

During their stay at Richmond, a communication was made to the prisoners, through Martin, that a conspiracy was on foot to rescue them; in which Lalor, Philip Gray, Luby, and Brenan were concerned; but they forbade the attempt as hopeless, and it was abandoned. At the close of July they were carried away in the sloop-of-war *Swift* to Van Dieman's Land,

for life as it seemed: but where they were destined to spend only five years.*

For those who remained in Ireland the most urgent question was—What policy would best promote the interest of the country in existing circumstances? I had heard in prison of the formation of Secret Societies, founded by clubmen ashamed of the catastrophe in Tipperary; and the day after my release, a pleasant Sunday in spring, a number of young men surrounded me as I came out of the little church on Haddington Road, and whispered that before that day month they would invite me to organise a Provisional Government in the free capital of Ireland. This was alarming news; for to my thinking it meant that a number of young men were rushing on certain ruin. I told them that I desired as much as of old to see Ireland ruled by her own Parliament alone, but it was childish to talk of accomplishing such a task with the fragment of a defeated party, in a country in a state of collapse. The goal was a distant one, and was to be reached by quite other means than these.

I speedily discovered that the project was not confined to enthusiastic young men. I had made Fintan Lalor's acquaintance in Newgate, and found his conversation nearly as striking and original as his writings. After my release I visited him in Capel

* Meagher has described O'Brien's demeanour during the voyage:—"Never did an angry emotion, never did a rude word, seldom did a faint complaint, escape his lips. And yet, as the door of that vile vehicle, in which we were hurried from our prison to the sloop-of-war, was shut upon us I saw that the face which had never quivered in any danger, and on

Street. He had made some progress in founding a national journal, and he urged me to take the control of it. "Two journals," he said, "will mean two parties; let there be only one, and let it be yours." But it was useless to enter on such a confederacy unless our aims were identical, and I found he had engaged in a new conspiracy, and meditated an insurrection within a few months. I told him that the naked facts of the case rendered such a design hopeless, and that if it were hopeless it was wicked. I acknowledged that Ireland had a *casus belli;* but I denied that she had the power, or even the disposition, to prosecute it in 1849. The aversion of young men from acknowledging themselves finally defeated by the poor experiment in Tipperary was a natural and even a salutary and generous sentiment. It would keep alive the spirit of nationality for better times; but to expect that it would enable them to drive an English army out of Ireland was childish. Sarsfield yielded Limerick with 30,000 men still under arms, because 30,000 men were not able to cope with the force opposed to him; Lalor could not count on military obedience from as many hundred, and I invited him to draw the necessary inference. But he drew a widely different inference, and proceeded with his design. The fundamental distinction between thinkers

which an unconquerable will had stamped the defiance of death in iron characters, was bathed in tears. It was but a moment before he had embraced his wife and children, and bade them good-bye—it might be for ever! This was the thought which ruled him then—and it ruled him as though he were the tenderest child that ever laid an aching head upon a mother's lap. His country should have witnessed that scene, to know the depth of his love for Ireland, and what it cost him to be true to her."

and men of action was never more signally illustrated than in his subsequent career.

After the departure of O'Brien I made a journey through the south and south-west to recruit my health,* and when I came back I found Dublin in a flutter of factitious enthusiasm, welcoming a visit from the Queen. The day after my return, a young Dublin priest (who afterwards died a martyr to his duty), came to me in a fever of excitement, to announce that the Secret Societies were about to seize the Queen's person, and hold her as a hostage for the State prisoners. "Hold her!" I said; "have they got a Gibraltar for the purpose?" "They'll carry her to the Dublin mountains," he replied, "and secrete her where 'General Holt' so long baffled all the efforts of the English troops." "Folly, my friend," I rejoined; "if we assume (and it is a preposterous assumption) that they succeeded in snatching the Queen from ten thousand British troops in Dublin, and carrying her to the mountains, there is not a dell or glade in Kippure which would not be as well trodden as Sackville Street before twenty-four hours."*

It was under these circumstances I revived the *Nation* and re-entered the field of Irish politics. I

* This is the journey described in Carlyle's account of his visit to Ireland in 1849. A book which I think ought never to have been published; for it presents a man, who was at bottom generous and considerate, as a merciless critic upon unoffending persons, whose hospitality and good services he accepted. For me and some of my friends he has only kind words, but scarcely anyone else escapes his sarcasm; an instrument of torture so trenchant that it ought to be reserved for public offenders.

† It is probably little known that this attempt actually assumed some shadowy form. On a certain night—a command night at the theatre,

knew that an insurrection, which would be more futile than the last, was ripening, and my plainest duty was to tell the people there was no hope or safety in that direction. Without alluding to these secret designs, I taught a policy incompatible with them—the policy of dealing first with the urgent questions of the hour. And never were questions more peremptory. In many districts, during my late visit, I found two cabins out of three plucked down by the Exterminator, the workhouses were crammed with idle, sweltering paupers, and the highways crowded with beggars. All that was best in the Irish nature was slowly rotting away. Those who could escape were flying from the country by every port. If the evil could not be arrested, the Irish race might disappear from the island, and, perhaps, from the face of the earth. "In order to do their public duty, states and people must first be kept alive," says Dr. Arnold, "for self-preservation is an essential condition of all virtue." I invited those who remained to make a united effort to save our people. But this project was not in substitution of the purpose for which the *Nation* had been founded, but in support of it, by the only method practicable at that time.

"I ask whomsoever believes he can trust my truth," I said, "to be assured of this thing—that if I did not think we could win the independence of Ireland I would never write, or utter,

I think—a muster of volunteers for the adventure was summoned for nine o'clock at night, on the banks of the Grand Canal. About two hundred club men came to the rendezvous, armed with pistols and daggers, but as they could scarcely esteem themselves competent to beat the garrison they dispersed, and the adventure came to an end.

one word more on Irish politics. I aim for no lower prize than this island to be enjoyed absolutely and exclusively by its own people. I sought it at a peril of my head; I preached it till the English Government snatched the pen and the press from my hands—and it was not nearer my heart or dearer to my imagination at that hour than at this. But I can strive for it only by paths that will reach it. All false and empty swaggering on a subject so solemn seems to me base and horrible. A mountain lies in our path, and I cannot pretend we will leap over it. Our road lies round the base, and no other way. Men may desire a short cut, but, unhappily, there is no short cut just now."

It was then the Tenant League was formed, and Frederick Lucas transferred his *Tablet* to Ireland, and carried his practical genius to this new field; the north was enlisted, and, for the first time in our history, Presbyterian ministers and Catholic priests were seen side by side, and almost in equal numbers, in the ranks of the new organisation.* Its history is not to be written here; but whatever was accomplished for the Irish tenant from that time forth had its tap-root in that League as assuredly as the victory of Free Trade sprung from the League in Manchester. For these labours the Secret Societies had nothing but contempt, and Mr. Mitchel, who arrived in America at this time, was able to declare, as a certain fact, that Tenant Right in no shape would ever be established by the British

* "Before I was three months out of prison, I had personally visited Mr. Lucas in London, Doctor McKnight in Derry, Mr. Maguire in Cork, Doctor Cane and Father Tom O'Shea in Kilkenny, Mr. Shine Lalor and Mr. Shea Lalor in Kerry, Mr. Godkin in England, Mr. T. Dillon in Mayo (Thomas Dillon was eldest brother of John Dillon), and other friends elsewhere, to debate the feasibility of a Tenant Right movement."—Farewell Address of Charles Gavan Duffy, August, 1855.

Parliament, nor would they consent to pluck a single parsonage from the wings of the Established Church. But time vindicates the truth. The movement which then commenced, and movements which were its legitimate successors, have since disestablished the landlords and the Church, and made aristocratic dictation and Protestant ascendancy as obsolete as the Brehon laws. And after an absence of a quarter of a century from Ireland, I find the people eagerly pursuing a fragment of the policy formulated in 1850.

I cannot pause upon the projects then devised to plant the people in Leinster and Munster instead of Wisconsin and Michigan; to educate the generation coming out of school in the knowledge of their country; to revive the public spirit which had fallen to the freezing point; but the *Nation* aimed to be all it had been of old, and to complete the task which the famine and the French revolution had fatally interrupted.*

Lalor proceeded by other methods. Before O'Brien was two months at sea, a day was fixed for a general

* Under the title, "Wanted, a few Workmen," I invited young men to fill the places left vacant in our ranks, and to undertake certain practical tasks of education and social improvement. Among those who answered the appeal were two who have since distinguished themselves in a public career: John George MacCarthy, late member for Mallow, and William Shaw, successor to Isaac Butt as leader of the Home Rule party, and still a distinguished member of Parliament. The article is worth recalling for a moment from the oblivion which awaits journalism, for the circumstance of having pleased Thomas Carlyle—not too profuse of praise for that sort of work:—"Capital article, dear Duffy, that in last *Nation*—'Wanted, a few Workmen!' To every word and tone of that I say, Amen. Stand by that; that is the real text to preach innumerable sermons from; properly the one result to be striven for; all other results whatsoever to be measured precisely by their effect towards accomplishing of this! I call this the best article I ever read on Ireland; a noble 'eloquence' in this, the eloquence of sorrow, indignation, and belief. Cart is not put before horse

insurrection.* But it failed so hopelessly that scarcely a memory of it remains. Brenan, at the head of a muster of young men from the neighbouring towns, attacked the police-barracks at Cappoquin. The attack was repulsed, and his party dispersed. As a policeman and one of the insurgents were killed in the affray, Brenan found it necessary to fly to America, where, after doing successful work as a journalist, he died prematurely. Lalor's attempt was a more complete fiasco; ten days after the flight of Brenan he wrote me in utter despair:—

"I have now," he said, "either to retire and remain mute, or give my pen to some existing journal; and am desirous to know whether the *Nation* wants me. I can't tell how far I could be of service to it or you; or whether you and I could fully or efficiently agree. We must settle that. As to being of service to Ireland, such as it is, I give it up. The coffin-lid has closed on the last hope of the living generation."

I would gladly have found Lalor an opening in journalism; but, when his first disgust passed away, he recurred to conspiracy, and to me conspiracy for a new Ballingarry was stark madness. But Lalor was a practical politician compared to Mitchel. He taught, from New York, that the existing system was abominable and accursed in all its parts; that Ireland was not prepared for insurrection, and would be mad to attempt

in these utterances of yours—the first time I have ever seen that condition observed (that I can remember) by any patriotic Irish writer or speaker whatsoever. Steady, steady! Hold on in that course which will spread out wide as the world for you, and you will do immense good. *Ut fiat!* In great haste yours, T. CARLYLE. Chelsea, Tuesday, October 2nd, '49."

* September 16, '49.

it under existing circumstances; but meantime that no sensible and honest man would seek a remedy from Parliament or agitation, but wait the good time coming. The Crimean war, the Indian Mutiny, or the Fenian insurrection might be supposed to represent such a good time, if ever it was to come; but it never did come to Mr. Mitchel's satisfaction, and while they were awaiting it, the one advice he continued to offer his countrymen was to reject with scorn whatever any one else proposed.*

It is an instructive fact that everywhere in Europe the cause of liberty was lost in this era by the violence of Ultras, who would not accept the possible and attainable. In France the Socialist revolted against the Republic, and the nation took refuge in the arms of a despot. In Italy they thwarted Charles Albert, and Austria recovered, one after another, all her relinquished provinces. In Hungary the voice of Francis Déak, who desired to negociate peace on the basis of a free separate constitution for Hungary, such as she now enjoys, was drowned in the roar of applause which greeted Kossuth's proposal to found a Republic, and his Republic disappeared under the feet of Cossacks and Croats.

I entered the House of Commons, in 1852, as one of an Independent Irish party, which sowed seed that

* "Those who desire their country's independence do *not* and will not demand 'Repeal of the Union.'" . . "We do not want Mr. Bright's 'Reform,' nor Mr. Mill's plan, nor Mr. Martin's 'Repeal,' nor Mr. Butt's 'Home Rule,' and would not stir an inch to help either or any of them."—Letter of Mr. Mitchel.

ripened later, but failed to gather the harvest, for reasons which cannot be enlarged upon here. After four sessions I resigned my seat, because (as I explained) at every election dishonest candidates were preferred by the people, and the worst of them, John Sadleir and William Keogh, were able to present themselves to their supporters like Richard III. leaning on two bishops. Till the shameless political profligacy which prevailed was abandoned and repudiated, "till all this was changed there was no more hope for the Irish cause than for a corpse on the dissecting table." * And I left Ireland for another reason, that "the ultimate aim for which alone I laboured, to give back to Ireland her national existence, was now forgotten or disdained."

Young Ireland was routed and scattered almost to the last man. They bore away with them from Ireland the stigma of a lost cause and the reproach of an ignominious failure. To scornful enemies they were pipers of sonnets and spouters of orations, who had mistaken themselves for men of action. But when disaster had dispersed them wide over the earth, their true mettle appeared. Among the shrewd, hard lawyers of

* As this saying has been constantly misrepresented, I will quote a couple of sentences from a letter of the period, in which I explain it, when it was first called in question—"I did not say that the Irish cause is hopeless; neither did I counsel inaction or despair. Quite otherwise. I insisted that the Irish people could at any time make their cause triumphant. What I said was that all my efforts to induce them to do so had failed. . . . I did not despair of the final triumph of the cause, which would be to disbelieve in God's justice; but I greatly despaired of the present disposition of the country, and entirely in the success of one invalided soldier who has struggled and striven so long in vain. Some one else may be more fortunate, which Heaven send."—Letter of C. G. Duffy to the *Tablet*, September 6th, 1855.

New York, and the long-descended habitants who feed their flocks by the St. Lawrence, among the trappers of the Far West, among the missionaries and teachers of the Catholic Church, of the Protestant Church, and of the Methodist connection, in the army of Charles Albert, among the soldiers who endangered, and the soldiers who preserved, the Western Republic, in Courts of Justice and in Legislatures far apart through two hemispheres, they won foremost places, and maintained the reputation of their race.

A brief glance at their career is as essential to the close of this narrative, as the final chapter in the fictions of the last century which used to record the fortunes of every personage in whose behalf the interest of the reader had been awakened.

We left O'Gorman and his associates in Limerick, among a peasantry whose enthusiasm was waning fast. They fell back upon Clare, sheltering in miserable hiding places, and constantly hunted by the police, till it became plain that all was over, when they determined to leave Ireland. It was a difficult enterprise, with every port watched by detectives and informers. The papers were filled for weeks with stories of O'Gorman's hair-breadth escapes and romantic adventures. On one occasion, the police magistrate on the watch for him was said to have given him his arm on board a river steamer, the good-looking young rebel being disguised as a lady. At length they got on board a ship lying in the Shannon, which was bound for Odessa; and, like Kossuth at a later day, found Christian shelter under

the crescent of the Turk.* O'Donnell and Doyle returned to Ireland, and are long since dead. O'Gorman reached New York, was admitted to practise at the American Bar, where he won a decided success. He is now a judge of the Superior Court of New York: the fitting close of an honourable career.

When Dillon was repulsed by Fr. Kenyon he directed his course westward. He was carefully sheltered while there was any hope that a success in Tipperary would give him work to do, and after O'Brien's arrest his escape was skilfully effected. He was put on board a small brig in Galway Bay, disguised as a priest, and made his way to New York. In that city he was received as Thomas Addis Emmet had been received half a century before. He was immediately called to the Bar, and placed on the Directory which had control of Irish interests. His sound judgment and vigorous intellect fitted him for the career of a lawyer, and he had considerable success in his profession; but his heart was in Ireland. Exile did not embitter his sweet disposition, or time deaden his sympathy with his early friends. The party to which he belonged was founded on personal friendships almost as much as on common opinions. Davis and Dillon were fellow students; so were O'Hagan and Pigot; Meagher and Smyth were schoolfellows; and Mitchel and Martin also; O'Gorman and Barry were chums at the outset of

* Their faithful allies, the leaders at Abbeyfeale, were dogged and hunted from place to place during the long nights of winter; the Harnetts contrived finally to get out of the country; but Hughes and some others were captured, tried, and punished with more or less severity.

their career; and McManus and I had been companions from boyhood. None of these ties were ever broken.

In 1855 Dillon returned to Ireland, resumed the practice of his profession, and speedily attained a foremost place in public affairs. He laboured with all the earnestness of his powerful nature; but with small result, I fear, except to steep his heart in bitterness and despair, by the constant sight of wrongs which he could not redress. He entered Parliament in 1866, and won many friends by his frankness and sincerity. The same courage which placed him in the front of the barricade at Killenaule, without a spark of fanaticism to blind him to the peril, enabled him to do his duty manfully. But he was ill content with the result, and to the end of his life believed that the House of Commons is the place where an Irish gentleman finds it hardest not to despair of Ireland.*

We left Smyth wandering through the south in search of the insurrection. At length he heard from a sure source that Fr. Kenyon had shut his doors in the face of Meagher and Dillon, and that the party had agreed to separate. Soon after, O'Brien and Meagher sent him advice to get out of the country as fast as he could. By the aid of a local priest he obtained a

* "I rejoice (he wrote to me in 1862) that you are not here to witness the wreck of all the high hopes we have cherished. You, I think, could not exist here without being a public man, and being that you would be miserable. . . In the midst of this hopeless gloom the news of your success comes to your old friends like a ray of light. When our enemies attribute our failures (individual and collective) to our want of capacity and energy, we have but one answer, and it is a conclusive one—we point to men of Irish birth or blood who are prosperous and distinguished everywhere but at home," &c.

steerage passage in a small brig, of 180 tons, lying in Galway Bay, embarked at midnight in a fisherman's boat, and escaped the scrutiny of the police and marines in the disguise of a peasant. When the brig got under way, a missionary priest was put on board—a tall, dark, grave ecclesiastic, of a type not uncommon in the West. Smyth thought he had seen the missionary before on other service, and accosted him under his breath; but the pastor was shy of new acquaintances, and was disposed to move off, when Smyth whispered, "Don't you know me, Dillon?" The voyage was long and dangerous; it occupied six times the period the Cunard steamers employ on the same passage, but at length they reached New York, and saw the sheltering flag of the Republic.

On settling down in America he turned his attention to the prospect of rescuing the State prisoners; but the Directory deemed the project impossible. In 1852, however, McManus and Meagher made their escape and reached the States in safety. McManus, having been arrested by an excess of authority, for some supposed violation of convict regulations, appealed to a bench of magistrates, and was set at liberty. Being thus free from any obligation to his gaolers, he made his escape to San Francisco. A little later Meagher resigned his parole, and also escaped. Smyth was then despatched by the Directory to Van Dieman's Land to aid O'Brien and the other prisoners. Before his arrival, O'Brien, who had refused to give any parole and was kept a close prisoner in Maria Island, had made an unsuccessful attempt to escape, and insisted that it was now

Mitchel's turn to be helped. The means and method of Mitchel's escape, which did not want daring or self-reliance, have been frequently described, and raised questions which I prefer not to revive here. In later years Smyth has been a Member of Parliament, and, on the testimony of the leaders of the House, has delivered speeches on Irish questions, which, for some of the greatest qualities of oratory, they have never heard excelled.

After Meagher's arrival he became the most popular foreign lecturer in the United States, and studied law for a time under Judge Emmet with a view to the bar, to which he was called. But when the war came he found fitter work. An Irish Brigade was raised to defend the country which had opened its gates to Irishmen, and Meagher led it gallantly through a stubborn and bloody campaign. "I have shared with the humblest soldier," he said to his comrades, in parting with them, "the hardships and dangers of the battle-field. Never did I order you to advance that I did not myself lead." When the war was at an end, he became Chief Secretary and Acting-Governor of the territory of Montana; but his new career was brought to a sudden and tragic close. During a trip down the Mississippi, in July, '67, he stumbled over a coil of rope on a dark night, fell into a swollen current, which no swimmer could resist, and the gifted soldier and patriot was lost before his absence was noticed.

Mitchel made his home in America, and became again a journalist. There was one function he could

perform to perfection—he was a trumpet to awake the slothful to duty and to sound defiance to the enemy. He tested the fidelity of his admirers painfully by defending negro slavery, and by vindicating Louis Napoleon who had strangled liberty in France. But more than a quarter of a century after his conviction they elected him Member of Parliament for Tipperary with passionate enthusiasm, and would have followed him cheerfully on any route to which there was a visible issue.

By an amnesty granted to the State prisoners in 1854, Martin was restored to his friends. On his return to Ireland he took up his natural *rôle* of a moderate constitutional Repealer, and in concert with The O'Donoghue founded a national organisation. He was elected to Parliament, and advocated Irish rights with a manifest honesty of purpose, at any rate, which won respect for his cause.

The reader heard last of McGee in Sligo, awaiting information from the south. When the fatal news arrived that Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and McManus were in the hands of the Government, he made his way to Derry, where Dr. Maginn and some of his clergy sheltered him. In the dress of a priest, with his breviary in hand, he got on board a brig at the mouth of the Foyle, and sailed for America.*

* His adventures on the voyage were afterwards a constant source of pleasantry; for there were Irish emigrants on board, who wanted his reverence's assistance in the most embarrassing contingencies. One pair were so impatient to be married that it was heartrending to resist their entreaties, but he assured them that his "faculties" were suspended at sea.

He became a journalist in New York, and afterwards in Boston; but his life was wasted in barren controversy: first with Archbishop Hughes, who took him to task for charging the failure in '48 on the Irish priesthood, and afterwards with a fierce and truculent coterie, of which his old enemy Reilly was the mouthpiece. It seems the eternal fate of unsuccessful revolutionists to fly at each others' throats. The followers of Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc were fighting duels in their English exile; the Hungarians in Paris were flinging dirt on Kossuth; the Constitutionalists of Italy disparaging Mazzini; but this Irish quarrel was the fiercest of all these unseemly squabbles.*

He found his true work later. In Canada he became the leader of the Irish immigrants, a great parliamentary orator, and one of the founders of the New Dominion. As the minister of a free state, he developed unexpected powers, and was universally recognised as a gifted and original statesman. Success did not wean him from his early labours. While he was a Canadian politician, he produced a careful and sympathetic history of Ireland, and constantly wrote verses as racy of the Irish soil as while he was a contributor to the *Nation*.

No man ever had distinguished services more grudgingly admitted. He had gifts which placed him on a level with the best of his associates, and for years he

* Some of Reilly's articles about McGee were a disgrace to Irish-American journalism by their foulness and mendacity. One commenced: "There are men who would defile their mother's grave for gain, and such a man is Thomas Darcy McGee."

applied them exclusively to the service of Ireland. As a poet he was not second to Davis, as an orator he possessed powers rarer and higher than Meagher's—persuasion, imagination, humour, and spontaneity. There is only one act in his life for which I offer no defence. He came back to Ireland and pampered the pride of her enemies by repudiating his early career. His resistance to a Fenian invasion of a country where Irishmen were generously received and fairly treated, was not an offence but a merit. There was no leading member of the party, from Davis to Meagher, who would not have done the same. And the end of his career was that he was foully murdered, doubtless by some scoundrel of his own race.

Williams after his acquittal emigrated to America, and became Professor of *Belles Lettres* in Springfield College, Mobile. He died in 1862 in Louisiana, and it is pleasant to record that the Irish companies of the New Hampshire Volunteers, when they heard that the poet's grave was neglected, raised a monument of Carrara marble to "Shamrock of the *Nation*."

Mangan, in the beginning of '48, was drawn into the political turmoil from which I had withheld him, and he fell into habits of irregularity and eccentricity, which, more than his revolutionary politics, brought his engagement with the College Library to an end. During the imprisonment and dispersion of his friends he was in sore distress; but he was tenderly aided by Fr. Meehan up to his death, which took place in the darkest hour of our contemporary history.

Some readers will miss from the bivouac and the dock one man who shared our counsels from the birth of the *Nation* down to the imprisonment of the Confederate journalists, and who has been often named in the narrative. I undertook this book resolved to evade no truth, however painful; and it must be written that the bright young enthusiast, whom we were accustomed to liken to Robert Emmet and to describe as a better St. Just, failed us in this extremity. Not through pusillanimity, or egotism, but because he was not able to resist the tears and despair of his family. His father was a just and considerate man, but he was blinded by the responsibilities of an official position to the true interest of his son. He judged ill when he overbore him on a subject where the deepest passion and emotions of his nature were engaged; the decision forced on the young man cast a shadow over the remainder of his life. He was safe and prosperous by the precautions of his kindred, but I do not doubt that he often envied O'Gorman in exile, or Meagher in the convict-ship. At a later period he made a great success at the Bar of Calcutta; but he died before his time had come, if it be measured by the lifetime of his cotemporaries and associates.

Barry, after his release from prison, treated the experiment of '48 as final, and the cause of Irish nationality as lost. As he was a journalist at that time, and constantly expounded and defended his opinion in the *Southern Reporter*, his defection excited bitter disappointment and displeasure. It is proper to note,

however, that he was just to the character and motives of his early associates, though he renounced their opinions. In later years he became for a time a Divisional Magistrate of Police in Dublin: and as the asking or accepting office under the system we assailed was the test-principle of Young Ireland, he was unsparingly denounced. He finally relinquished the appointment, and has since lived on the Continent.*

The Young Irelanders for the most part ended as they began. Some who were mesmerised into enthusiasm by sudden hopes and opportunities, had not patience for the protracted vigils of a defeated party, and fell off, and a few honestly modified their opinions; but with rare exceptions they lived and died in their original convictions. We can now perceive that their first work was their wisest and best, and that Irish nationality would have fared better if there had never been a French Revolution of 1848. That transaction arrested a work which was a necessary preliminary to social or political independence: the education of a people long depressed by poverty or injustice, in fair play, public spirit, and manliness. All that had been accomplished up to that time was swallowed up by famine, emigration, and unsuccessful insurrection. And if the Irish race, instead of being Anglicised or

* While he was a police magistrate a *mot* was attributed to him worthy of his early reputation. A constable giving evidence against an Irish American, suspected of being in Ireland with seditious designs, swore that the man wore a Republican hat. "A Republican hat!" exclaimed the counsel for the prisoner; "does your worship know what that means?" "I presume," said his worship, "a Republican hat is a hat without a crown."

Americanised, are to be developed in harmony with their nature, it is a work which must be begun anew, by another generation.

For myself, I have been called upon to defend my opinions where the vindication of Irish nationality was a less agreeable task than in the Rotunda of Dublin or on a platform in New York. When I held the highest office of the State in a community which was English and Scotch by an overwhelming majority,* a popular Englishman, the leader of the local Bar, directed a vote of censure against the administration, among other grounds, because I had been an Irish rebel; and I made answer in terms with which I will close this narrative:—

"I will soon have to account for my whole life, and I feel that it has been defaced by many sins and shortcomings; but there is one portion of it I must except from this censure. I can say without fear, and without impiety, that when I am called before the Judge of all men, I shall not fear to answer for my Irish career. I did what I believed best for Ireland, without any relation to its effect on myself. I am challenged to justify myself for having been an Irish rebel, under penalty of your fatal censure; and I am content to reply that the recollection that when my native country was in mortal peril I was among those who staked life for her deliverance, is a memory I would not exchange for anything that Parliaments or Sovereigns can give or take away."

It is a fact worth holding in recollection, in considering the question—Whether these islands cannot at last learn to live together, each under its own parliament?

* In the population of the colony of Victoria the Irish are one to four; in the Parliament the Irish members are in about the same proportion as in the Parliament of Westminster.

that an assembly of Englishmen and Scotchmen rejected the censure by a decisive majority. And this crucial question assuredly must still be encountered; for though men fail, and means and agencies are modified, a true cause is immortal. Just Englishmen understand Irish insurrection, but unfortunately they understand it when it is too late. Lord Holland, a Cabinet Minister under William IV., declared that the government of Ireland in the eighteenth century justified Lord Edward Fitzgerald in appealing to arms. Must we wait for a Cabinet Minister under Edward VII. to admit that the government of Ireland in 1848 justified Smith O'Brien and his associates?*

* I have more than once mentioned Mr. Thackeray in this narrative, as an acrimonious critic on Irish nationality and Irish Nationalists. It is right to say that he came, in the end, to modify his opinion on the men it set on their principles. When he wrote offensively of the Young Irelanders he knew none of them personally; but he subsequently made John Dillon's acquaintance in New York, and mine in London. It was with serious mortification that I heard from a man of letters that an anti-serious article in the *Times*, on the occasion of my quitting Ireland, in 1855, was "known to be Thackeray's." As I had reason to expect a different leave-taking, I was unwilling to carry such a doubt with me to the New World, and into the new life I was entering on, and I wrote frankly to tell him what was reported. This was his reply, written on the eve of a journey to the United States:—

"Thursday, September 6th.
36, Onslow Square.

"My dear Mr. Duffy.—There is not one word of truth in your correspondent's information. I have not written one line in the *Times*. Ye gods! when will well-informed correspondents leave off swallowing mouches and telling fibs? I wish you a happy voyage and prosperity wherever you are; and don't think I should be the man to hiss the boat that carried you away from the shore. May we both return to it ere long, and shake hands, says—Yours very sincerely, W. M. THACKERAY."

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